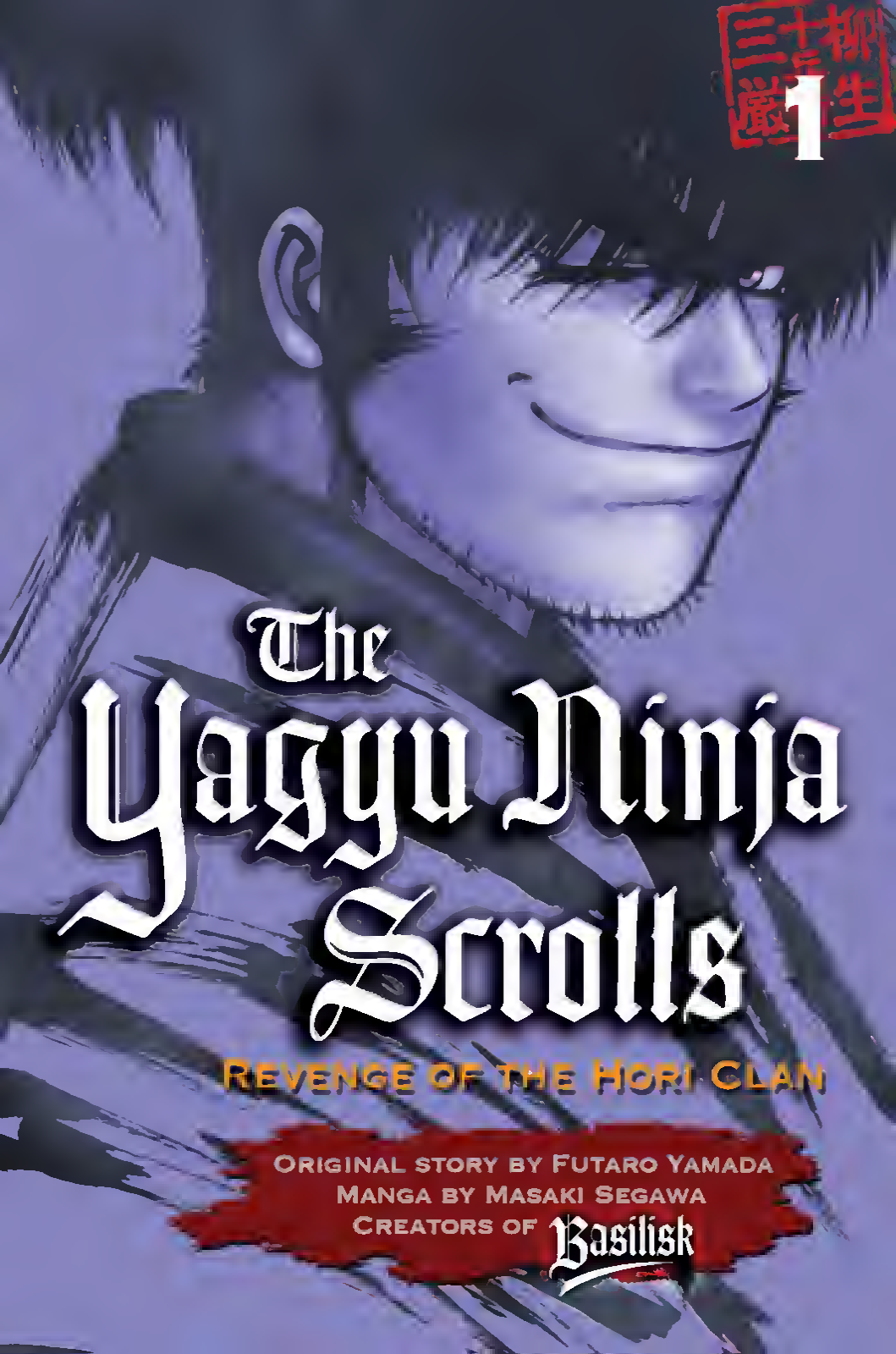
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The Yagyu Ninja Scrolls
Revenge of the Hori Clan
Original story by Futaro Yamada
Manga by Masaki Segawa
Creators of Basilisk

The Yagyu Ninja Scrolls

Revenge of the Yori Clan

ORIGINAL STORY BY FŪTARO YAMADA
MANGA BY MASAKI SEGAWA

TRANSLATED AND ADAPTED BY MINI EDA
LETTERED BY B. HAN

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First published in Japan in 2005 by Kodansha Ltd., Tokyo.

Translator/adapter: Mini Eda
Letterer: B. Han

Honorifics Explained

In this manga book, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in our manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san" and is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

-[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as *yobisute*, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

The Yagyu Ninja Scrolls

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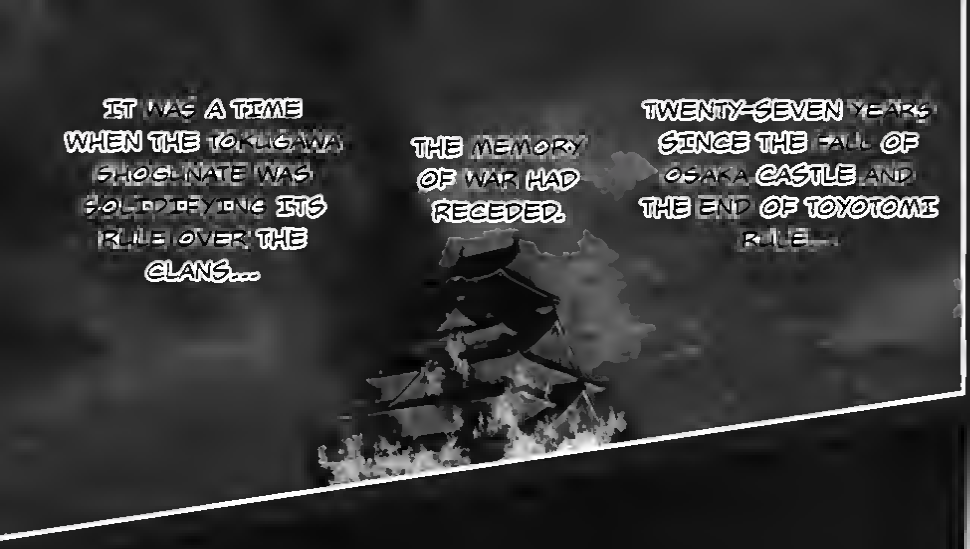

IT WAS A TIME WHEN THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE WAS SOLIDIFYING ITS RULE OVER THE CLANS...
THE MEMORY OF WAR HAD RECEDED.
TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS SINCE THE FALL OF OSAKA CASTLE AND THE END OF TOYOTOMI RULE...

KANEI 19 (1642), SPRING

ORIGINAL STORY BY
FŪTARO YAMADA
MANGA BY
MASAKI SEGAWA
The Yagyu Ninja Scrolls
REVENGE OF THE HORI CLAN

FU
FU
GRRR...
STEP
TÔKAIDÔ ROAD
OUTSKIRTS OF HIRATSUKA
GRRR...
FU
FU
FU
HA
HA
HA
HA
HEH
HEH
HA
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP

FORMER AIZU KUNI-GARÔ*
HORI MONDO TSUNAFUSA

HA
HA
ZA
ZA

STORY 1: THE BROKEN GATE

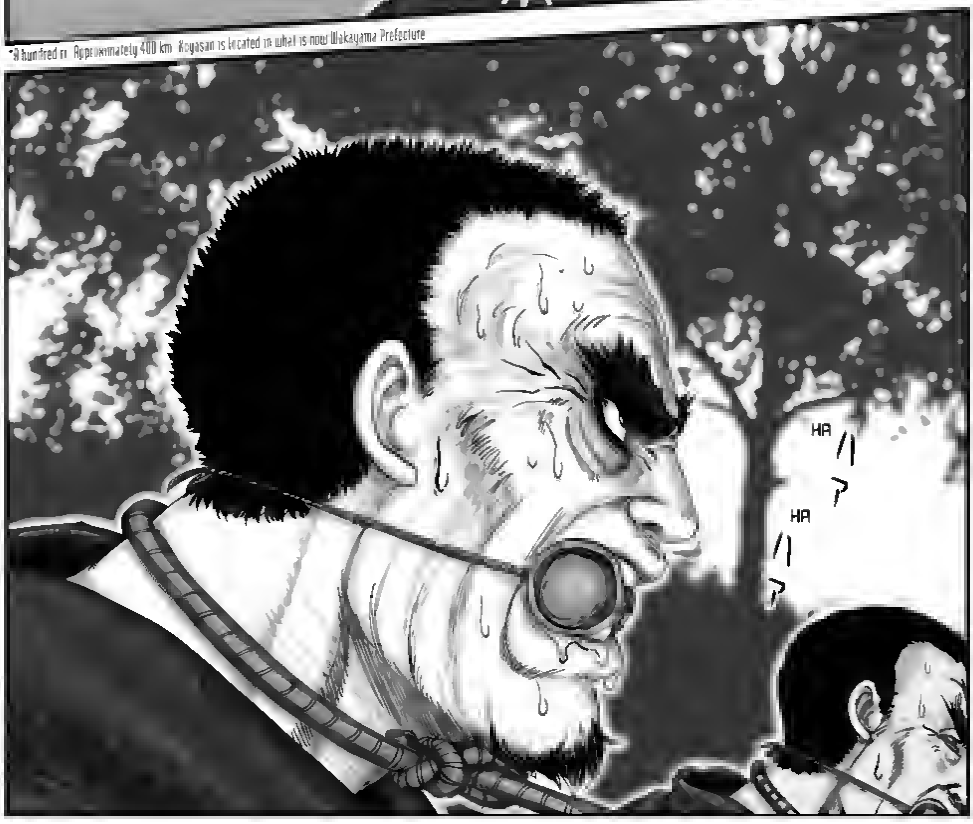
*Aizu Clan. Located in what is now Fukushima Prefecture.

CLOP
CLOP

BISSHH
GUH!
NGH!
STAGGER
STAGGER
STAGGER
THE OLD MAN BEHIND YOU GETS STRANGLED!!
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
CLOP
HEH HEH.
SMIRK
SMIRK
HEY,
IF YOU KEEP STUM-BLING...
GO ON, MONK!
WALK STRAIGHT!!
POKE
POKE
MGH ...
POKE

BINN
UH...
GUH...
STAGGER
STAGGER
STAGGER
STAGGER
STAGGER
STAGGER
...
THOSE MONKS ALL USED TO BE SAMURAI.
WELL... BETWEEN YOU AND ME
DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THEY'RE MONKS....
...HORRIBLE.
ACCORDING TO RUMORS I'VE HEARD DURING MY TRAVELS...
THEY'RE AIZU SAMURAI WHO REBELLED AGAINST THEIR LORD
THREE YEARS AGO AND FLED TO KOYASAN...
WHAT! SAMURAI!?
YES, INDEED...

*A hundred ri: Approximately 400 km. Kogasan is located in what is now Wakayama Prefecture.

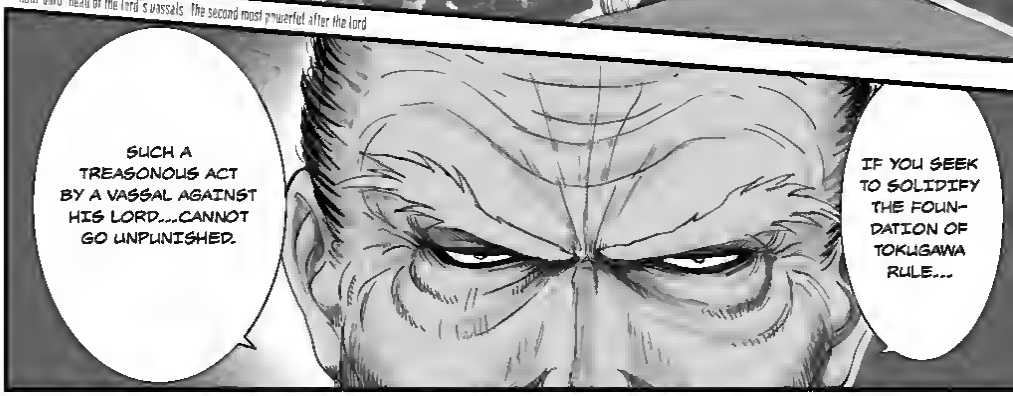


—EDO—
TÔEISAN KANNEIJI TEMPLE
ENTON-IN
AIZU LORD, KATÔ AKINARI...
THE THIRD SHOGUN, TOKUGAWA IYEMITSU (CHILDHOOD NAME TAKECHIYO)

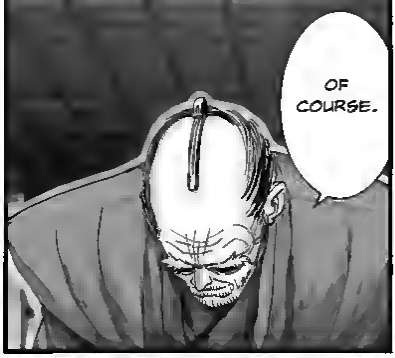
MY LORD?
...THE MATTER WITH HORI MONDO?
KANNEIJI TEMPLE, THE FIRST ARCHBISHOP
ARCHBISHOP NANKÔBÔ TENKAI
HE'S TROUBLE.
PACHIN
YES...
KATÔ SHIKIBUNOSHÔ AKINARI
I HEAR RUMORS THAT HE HAS THE RESPECT OF NEITHER HIS VASSALS NOR SUBJECTS.
ACTING UPON EVERY WHIM AND DESIRE,
HE HAS COMMITTED UNSPEAKABLE ATROCITIES AND SEXUAL ACTS...

*Sometsuke: A post entrusted to oversee the daimyo or feudal lords

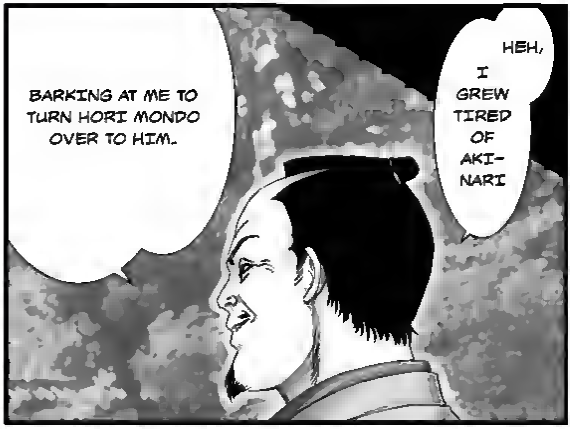
*Kuni Garô: Head of the lord's vassals. The second most powerful after the lord


SUCH A TREASONOUS ACT BY A VASSAL AGAINST HIS LORD....CANNOT GO UNPUNISHED.
IF YOU SEEK TO SOLIDIFY THE FOUNDATION OF TOKUGAWA RULE...

...EVEN SO,
I GRANTED AKINARI PERMIS-SION.


OF COURSE.

FOR THE HORI CLAN TO BE HANDED OVER TO HIM FROM KOYASAN...


BARKING AT ME TO TURN HORI MONDO OVER TO HIM.
HEH, I GREW TIRED OF AKI-NARI

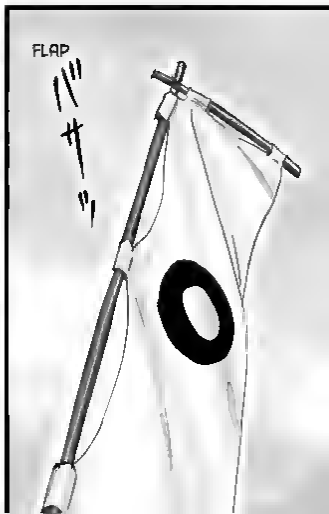
WELL DONE, MY LORD.
THAT IS THE APPROPRIATE DECISION IN THE EYES OF THE LAW...

HM... WHICH IS?

...BUT ANOTHER MATTER STILL WORRIES ME.

...IT IS WHERE

SOME WOMEN CONNECTED WITH THE HORI FACTION ARE HIDING...



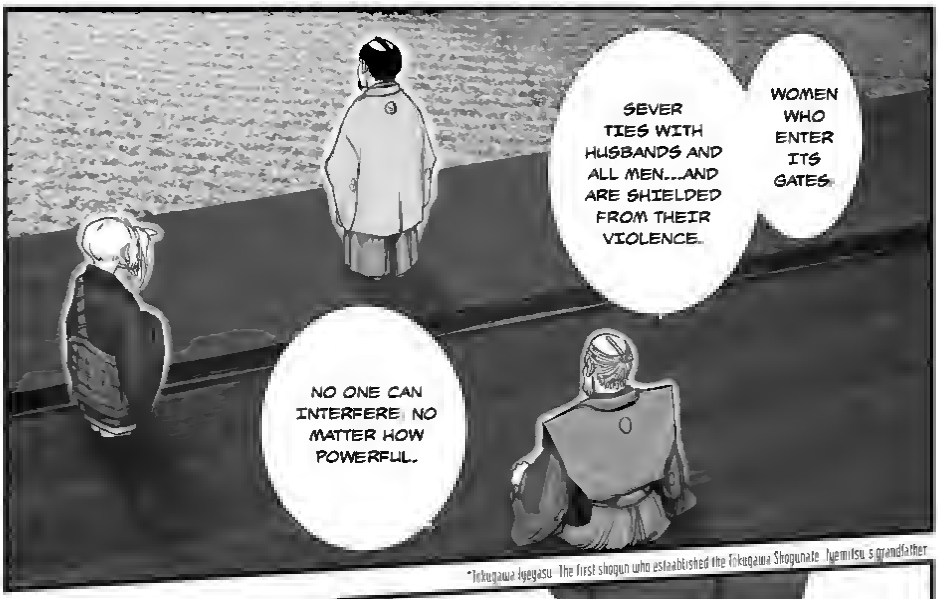
.....
WE'RE HEADING SOUTH FROM HERE.
MONDO.
SMILE
CLIP
CLOP
OH?
YOU SEEM TO WANT TO ASK... WHERE WE'RE GOING.
HMPH
YUGYÔ HILL STRAIGHT AHEAD WOULD TAKE US TO EDO BUT...
.....

BEFORE HEADING FOR THE KATÔ MANSION IN EDO.
FIRST
WE'RE GOING TO TÔKEIJI TEMPLE IN KAMAKURA*.
*Kamakura: The old capital about 50 km from Edo
NUU..
STAB
GUH.

GA
GA
GA
THE WOMEN OF THE HORI CLAN...
JAB
JAB
FLED INSIDE THE CONVENT!
GA
GA
GA
HIDING AMONG THE NUNS.
DID YOU THINK WE WOULDN'T KNOW!?
JAB
JAB
IDIOT!!
GA
GA
WAHA HA HA HA.
HEH HEH HEH.

—KAMAKURA—
TÔKEIJI TEMPLE, MAIN GATE
FLAP
HEH HEH.
.....

SLAM
CH-CHIEF PRIESTESS! CHIEF PRIESTESS!
CLACK
CLACK
HA
HA
HA
TH-THE "EYE OF THE SNAKE" CREST...
...THE KATÔ FAMILY.
AIZU...
STAGGER
WE ARE WARRIORS OF AIZU CLAN'S KATÔ FAMILY!
I AM GUSOKU JÔNOSHIN, ONE OF THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS!!
WASHI-NOSU REN-SUKE.
LIKE-WISE.
CRACK
CRACK
TAP
TAP
... SHIBA ICHI-GANBÔ.
SMIRK
SMIRK
SMIRK


SEVER TIES WITH HUSBANDS AND ALL MEN...AND ARE SHIELDED FROM THEIR VIOLENCE.
WOMEN WHO ENTER ITS GATES.
NO ONE CAN INTERFERE, NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL.

*Tokugawa Iyeyasu - The first shogun who established the Tokugawa Shogunate. Iyemitsu's grandfather

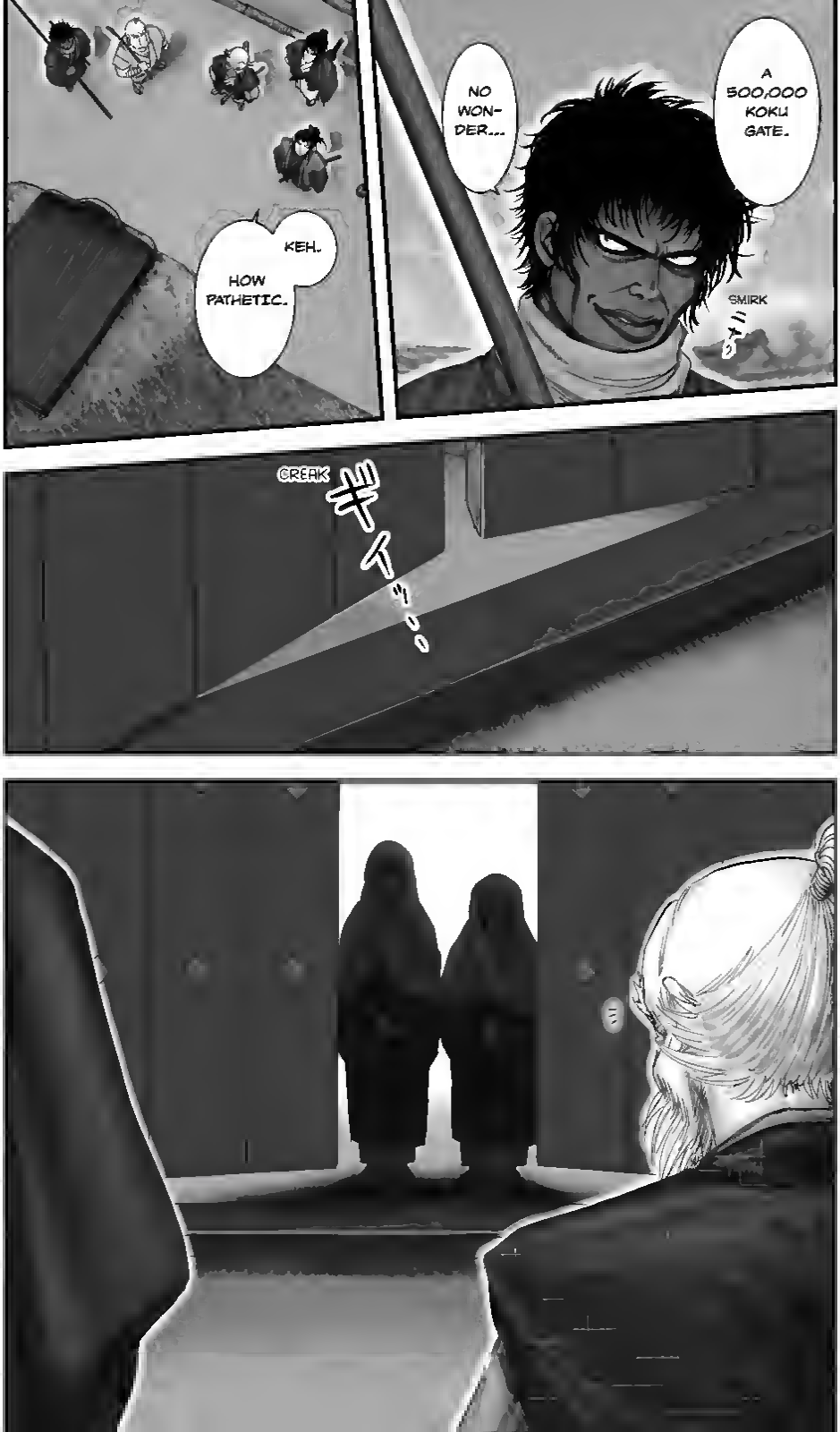
...MUNE-NORI.
WILL YOU LEAVE US?
?
...OF COURSE.
...I DO NOT WISH TO SEE HER SAD ANY MORE...
MY SISTER TENJUIN IS CONNECTED WITH TÔKEIJI TEMPLE...
THE MATTER? MY LORD...
SOME-THING...
SHUT
...
ASHINA.. DÔHAKU...

AND ACTING ON AKINARI'S BEHALF
...THE ONES RESPONSIBLE FOR HANDING OVER HORI MONDO
.....
WHA... WHAT DID YOU...
BUT A SMALL GROUP WITHIN AIZU VASSAL ASHINA DÔHAKU'S MEN.
DO NOT APPEAR TO BE LONGTIME VASSALS* TO THE KATÔ FAMILY...
*Longtime vassals: Many vassals serve the same family for generations
...I THOUGHT IT NECESSARY TO LET YOU KNOW.
...I PRAY... NOTHING GOES WRONG.
...YES... INDEED...
...DÔHAKU...

...FOOLS...

*Tokugawa Tadanaga Iyemitsu's younger brother. Childhood name was Kunichiyo

HEH.
THIS GATE BELONGED TO TOKUGAWA TADANAGA*,
HE WAS SUSPECTED OF TREASON AND COMMITTED HARA-KIRI, DESPITE BEING THE SHOGUN'S YOUNGER BROTHER.


KEH.
HOW PATHETIC.
NO WONDER...
A 500,000 KOKU GATE.
SMIRK
ニヤ
CREAK
ギイ

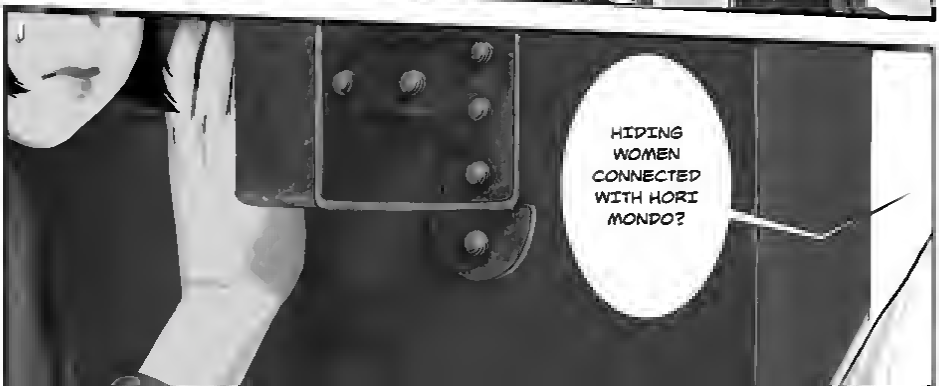
*Toyotomi Hideyori: Son of Toyotomi Hideyoshi

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

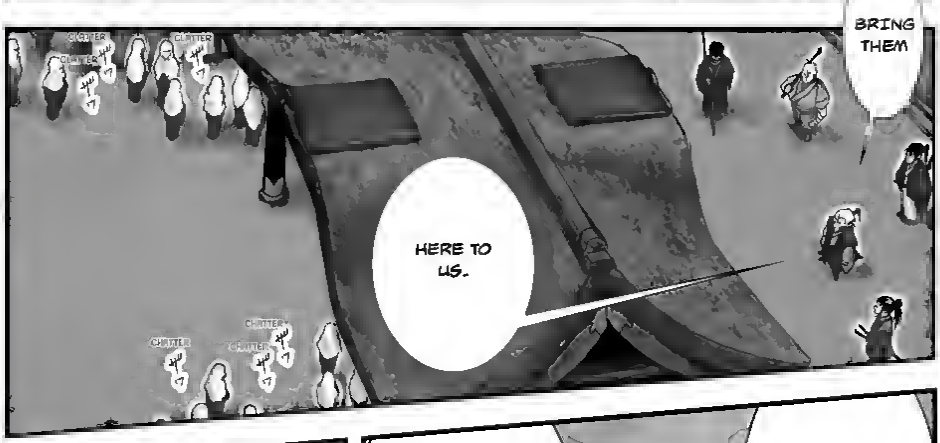
.....

CAREFUL YOU ARE NOT IMPUDENT.
BUT THE AIZU'S KATÔ FAMILY WAS LOYAL TO THE TOYOTOMI.
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE...

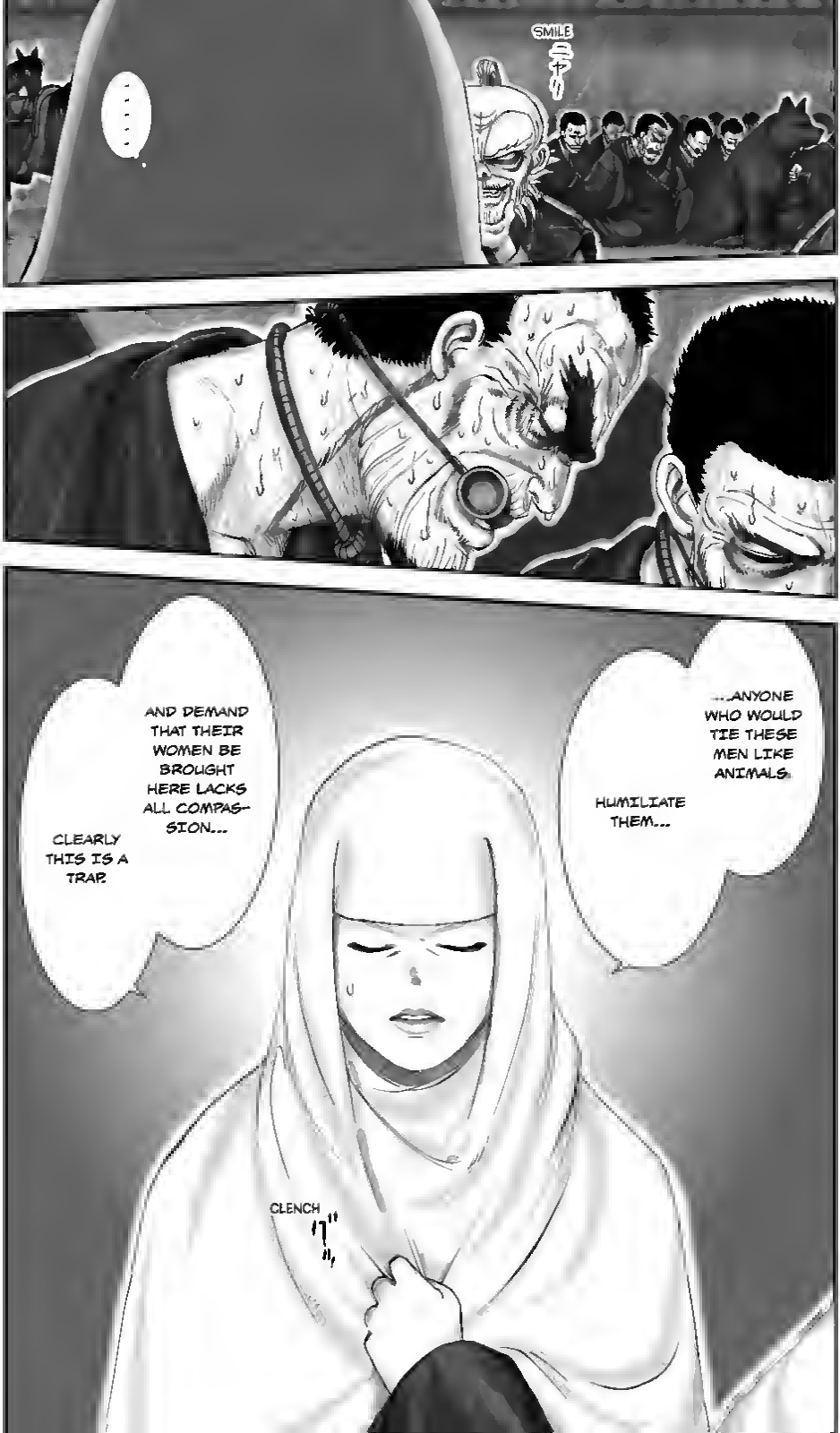
ARE YOU...

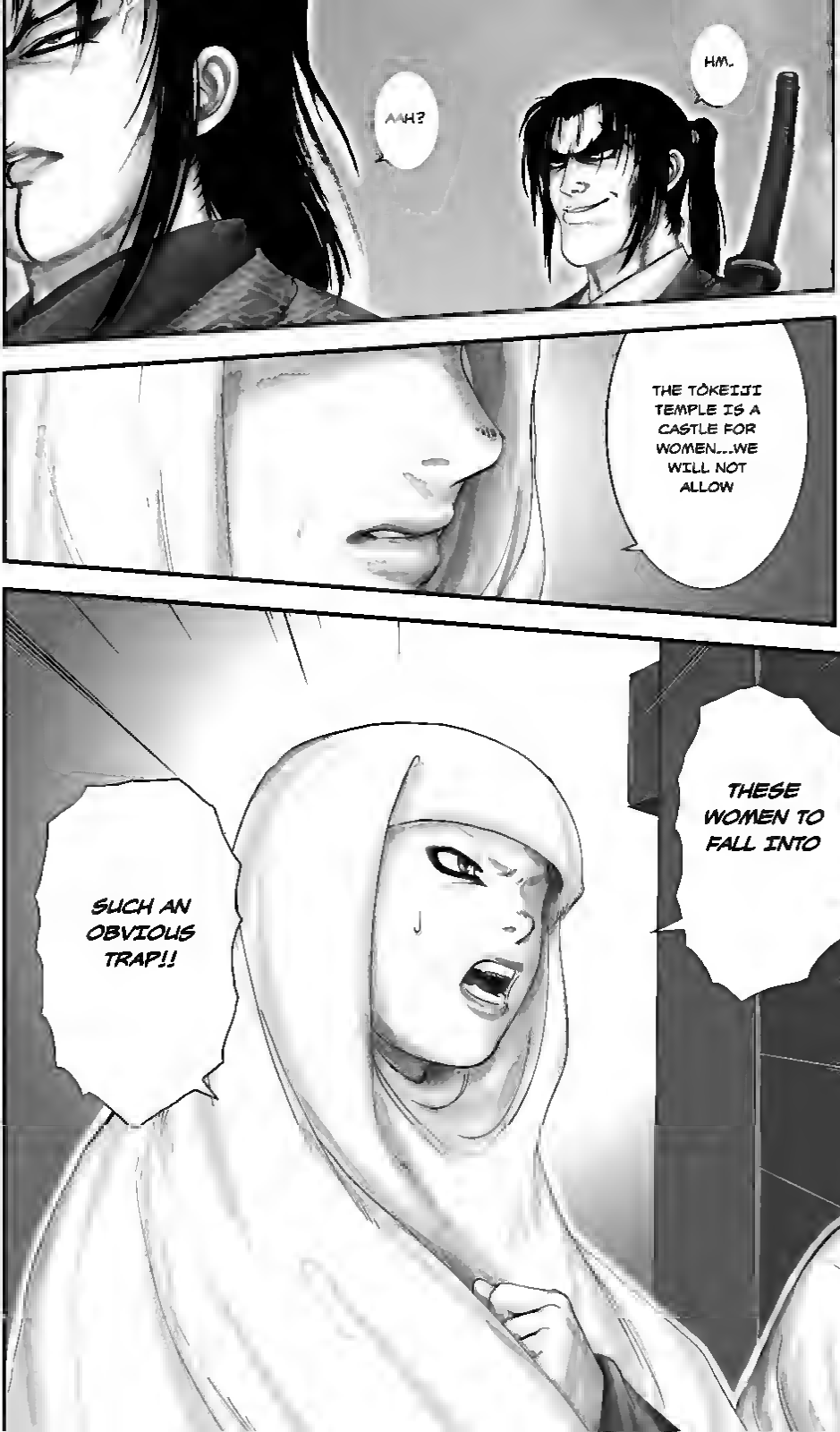

HIDING WOMEN CONNECTED WITH HORI MONDO?

.....

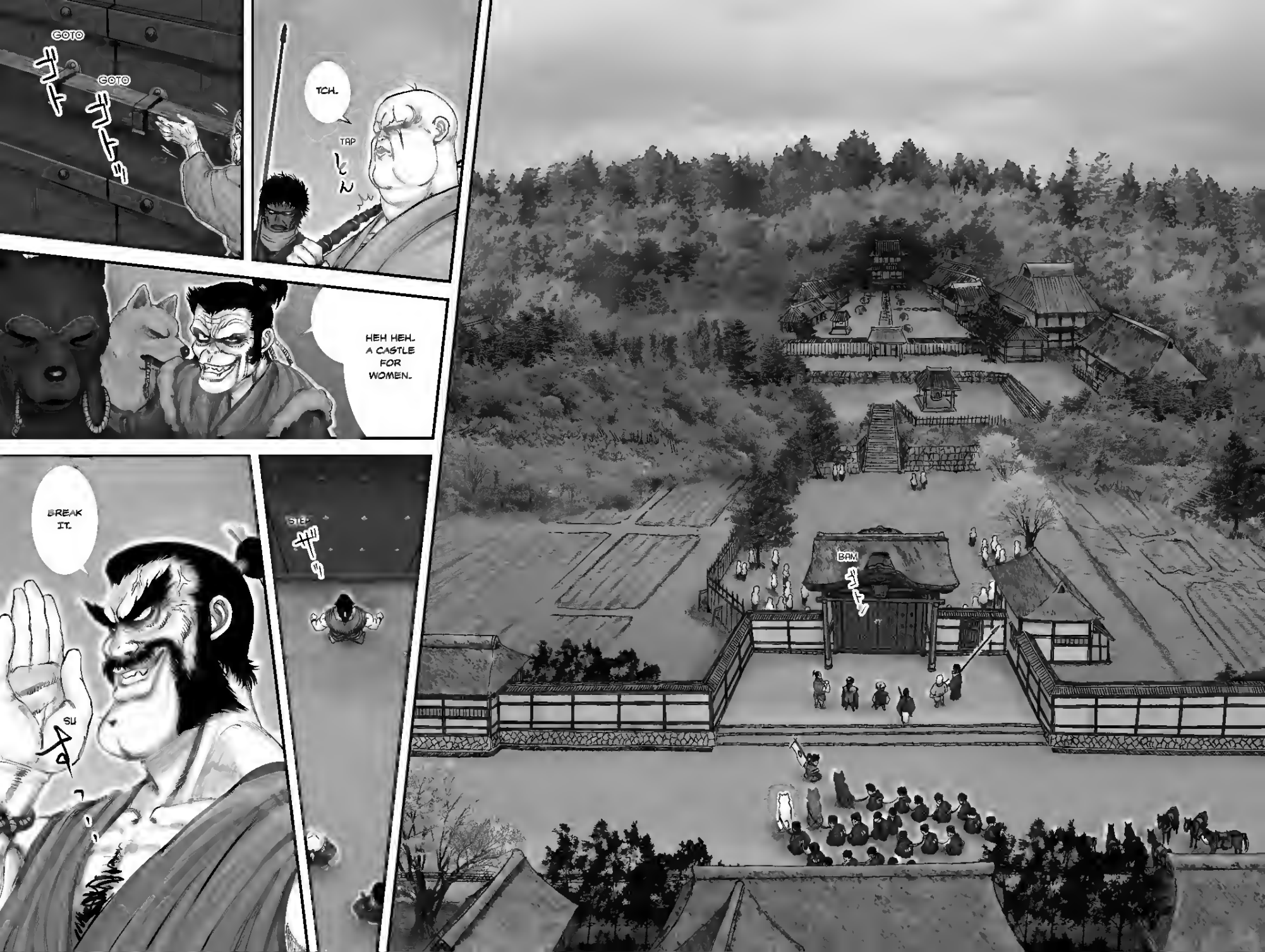

BRING THEM
HERE TO US.
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER

A SAMURAI'S COMPAS-SION...AS IT WERE.
WE'VE BROUGHT THEM HERE SO THEY CAN SAY THEIR GOOD-BYES.
WE CAPTURED HORI MONDO'S FACTION AT KÔYASAN WITH THE SHOGUN'S PERMISSION.

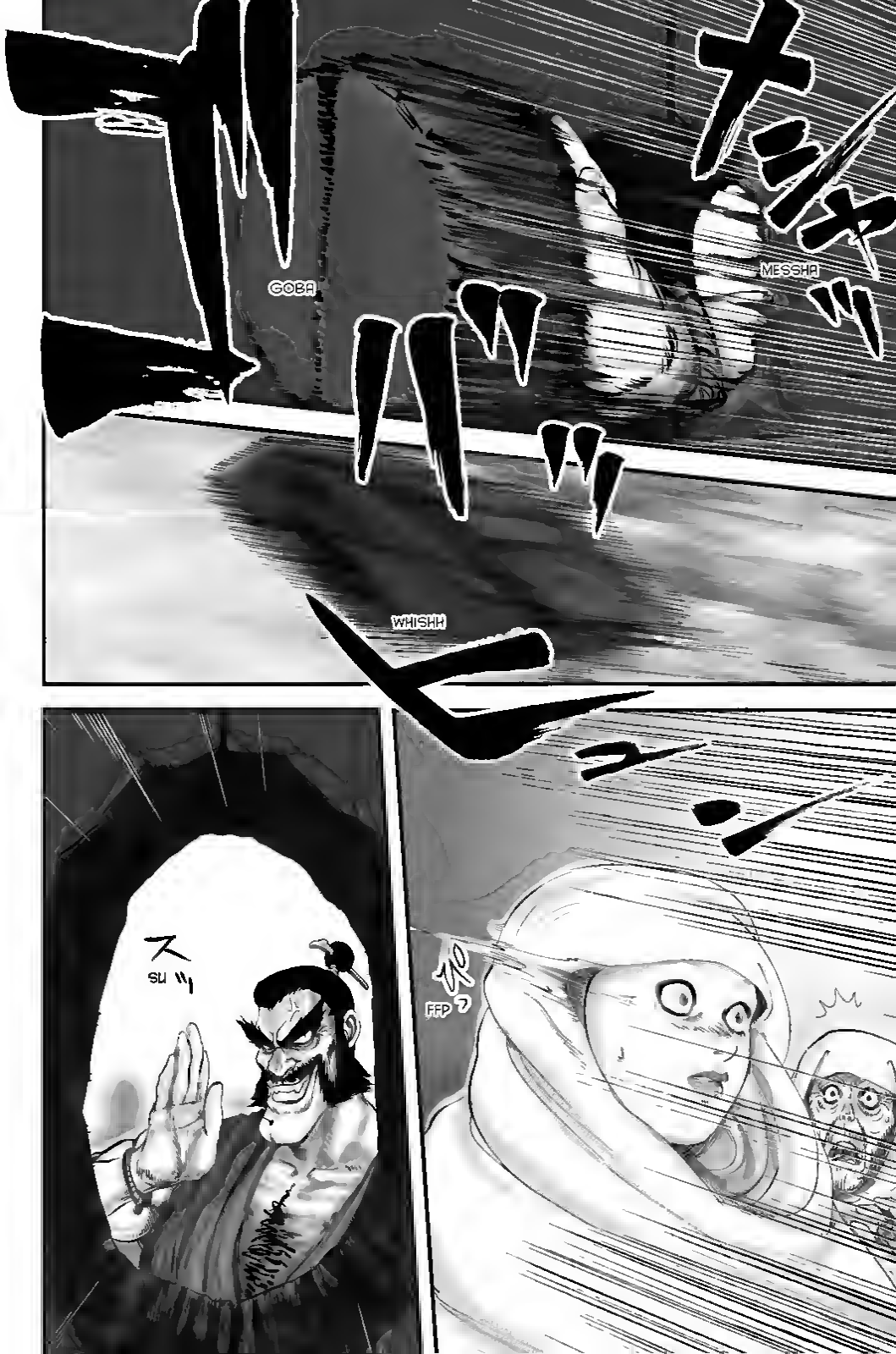

SMILE
ニヤリ
CLEARLY THIS IS A TRAP.
AND DEMAND THAT THEIR WOMEN BE BROUGHT HERE LACKS ALL COMPASSION...
HUMILIATE THEM...
...ANYONE WHO WOULD TIE THESE MEN LIKE ANIMALS.
CLENCH
ｷﾞﾘｯ


HM.
AAH?
THE TÔKEIJI TEMPLE IS A CASTLE FOR WOMEN...WE WILL NOT ALLOW
THESE WOMEN TO FALL INTO
SUCH AN OBVIOUS TRAP!!

. . . . .
WHAT.
CRACK
ボキ
CLOSE THE GATE.
Y...Y... YES.
CREAK


GOTO
GOTO
TCH.
TAP
HEH HEH. A CASTLE FOR WOMEN.
BREAK IT.
SU
STEP
BAM

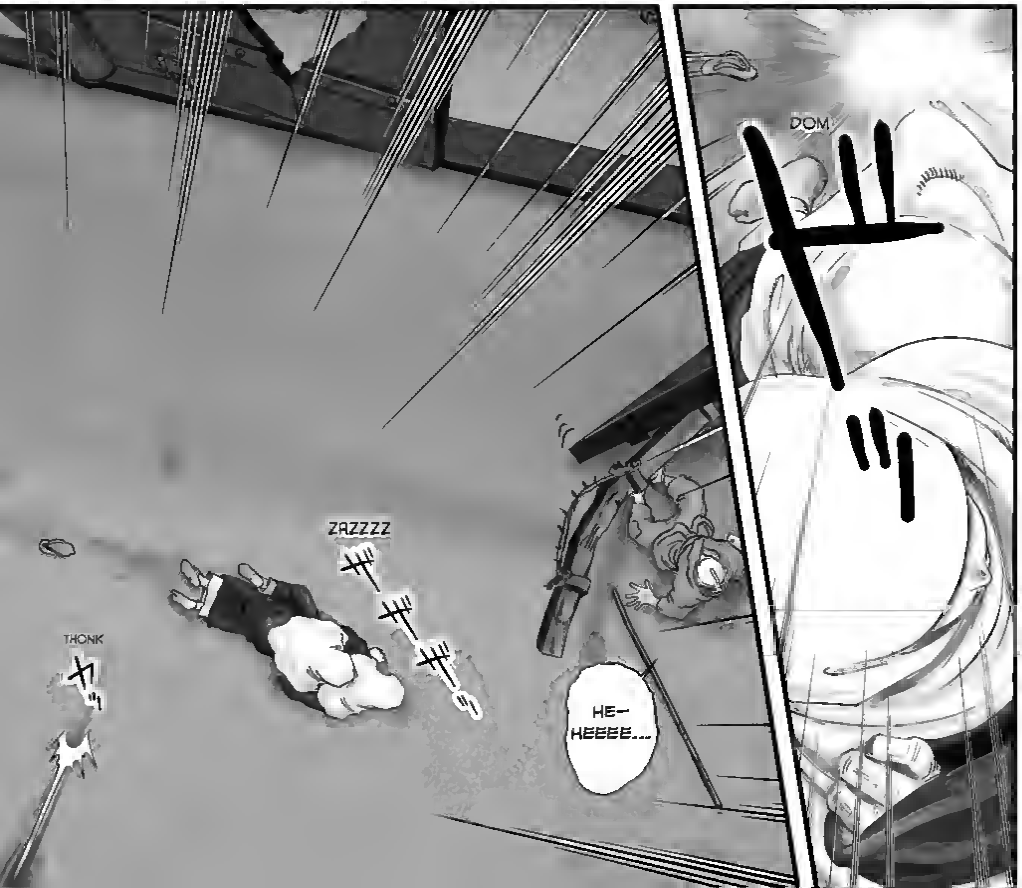
DOM
WHISHH
WHISHH
WHISHH
ZA
WO-
RYAA!


GOBA
MESSHA
WHISHH
SU
FFP

BOGO
DOGA
WO-RYAAH.
YAAH!
ZA
ZA

BA-KYUN
RIP
RIP
RIP
WHISHH
AHH!

LA-
LADY TENSHON!!


DOM
ZAZZZZ
THONK
HE-HEEEEE...

U... UH.
LADY TENSHUNI.
LADY TENSHUNI.
ZM
THONK
THONK
HEEE.
SU
ASHINA CLAN, AIZU SEVEN SPEARS
KÔRO GINSHIRÔ
FLICK

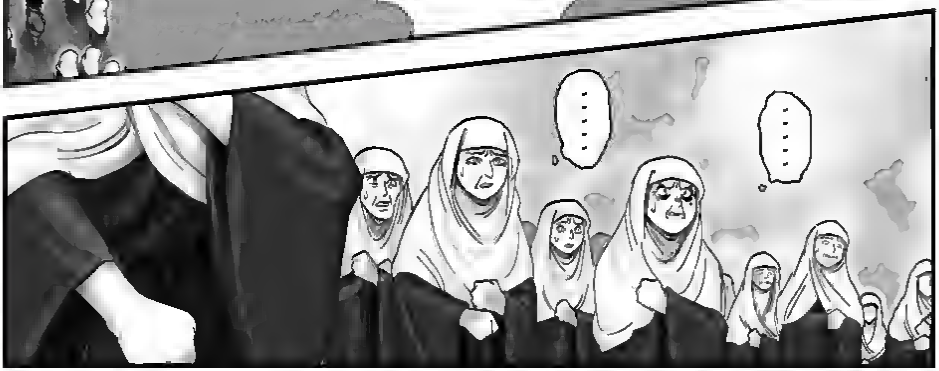
PASA
BAH
A...
AHH...
?
?
!?
HEH.
TUG
TUG

KIIII
きーー
AH.
KIII
きーー
AH.
TO HELL WITH TOYOTOMI...
TUG
ヴィ
TUG
ヴィ
AH... HIDEYORI'S DAUGHTER.
DASH
ダダダダ
AAH...
B...
BREATHE...
KYU
キュっ
KYU
キュっ
KYU
キュっ

DON'T MOVE!
BA
HEE.
FLINCH
YOU WERE SPARED BECAUSE YOU WERE BUT A GIRL...
BUT A NUISANCE TO TOKUGAWA.
AFTER THE FALL OF OSAKA CASTLE...
HE THREW YOU IN THIS CONVENT...TO BE RID OF YOU.
"CASTLE FOR WOMEN." DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH.
GRIN

THINK YOU'VE BECOME A NUN-SHOGUN
TENSHŌNI!!
GRIN
ニヤリ
HYUU...
ｷｭｰ
ｷｭｰ
ｷｭｰ

COME FORWARD IF YOU WANT TO SAVE TENSHŌIN!
YOU HORI WOMEN HIDING AS NUNS!


.....
.....

AS PROMISED.
THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS WILL ALLOW YOU... TO SEE YOUR MEN ONE LAST TIME.

STEP

HORI MONDO'S DAUGHTER...
OCHIE!
GRIN
.....
TUG
HEH.
FSSH
U... UH...
GO.
LET THE LADY TENSHŌNI

オロ
WORRY
オロ
WORRY
PLEASE WAKE UP...
AH... LADY TENSHONI.
U... UH...
SQUEEZE
THERE, THERE.
HEH HEH.
GRIN
GRIN

FATHER

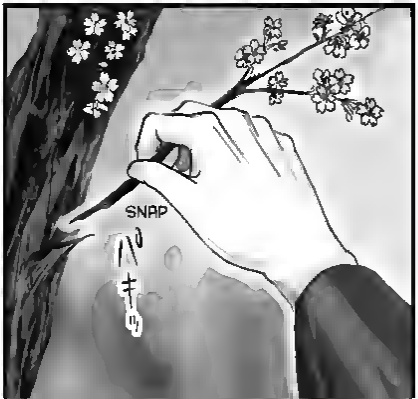
GRIN
GRIN
GRIN
MY DEAR

BROTHER

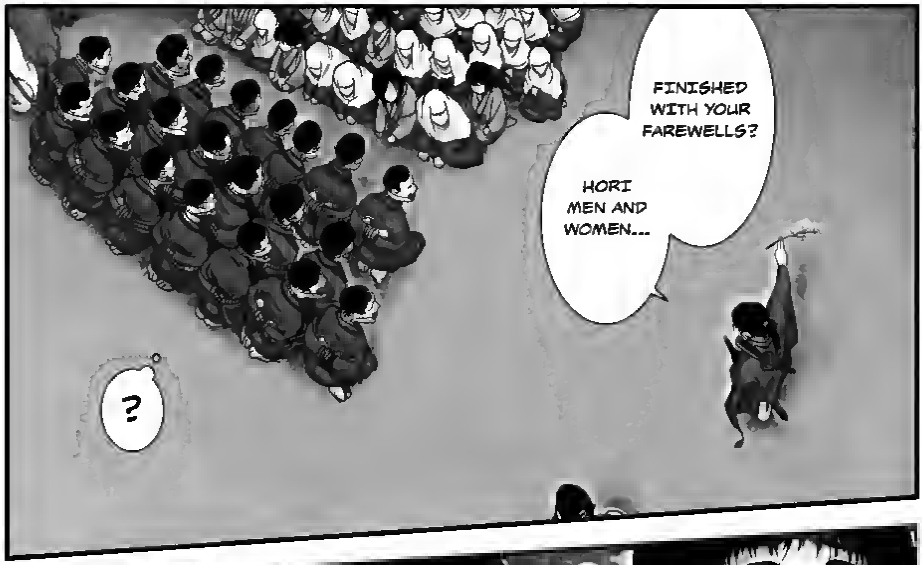
FATHER

BASA

SMILE
ニヤッ

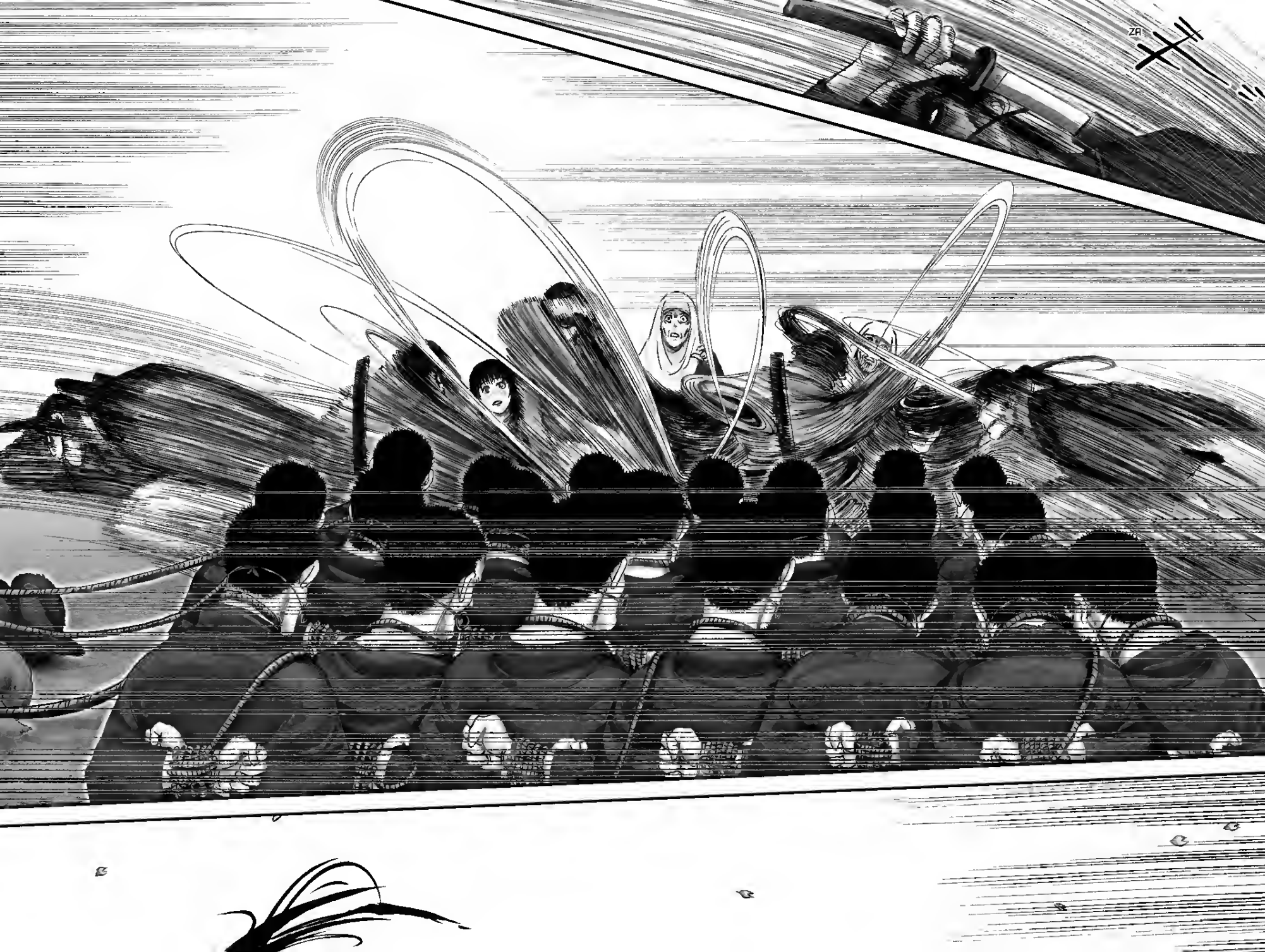

SNAP
パキッ

WELL THEN...


FINISHED WITH YOUR FAREWELLS?
HORI MEN AND WOMEN...
?

?...
...

THEN...
OUR HUSBANDS AND BROTHERS IN FRONT OF US!?
Y-YOU'RE NOT GOING TO KILL
CRUNCH
カリ
DIE.
カキーン
KACHIIN
...NO.


ZR

TAP
I MEANT
THE WOMEN...
ASHINA CLAN, AIZU SEVEN SPEARS
URUSHIDO KÔSHICHIRÔ
STORY 1 END

THREE YEARS AGO (KANNEI 16), SPRING
IT ALL BEGAN AT AIZU.
AIZU
NIKKŌ
EDO
KAMA-KURA
KŌYASAN

AIZU, OUTSIDE WAKAMATSU CASTLE
HORI MONDO MANSION

YOU WANT ME TO... OFFER MY DAUGHTER AS THE LORD'S MISTRESS?

WHA— WHAT...
ASHINA CLAN, AIZU SEVEN SPEARS
OAIDÔJI TESSAI
...
I DO NOT INTEND TO SACRIFICE MY DAUGHTER...
TO CURRY FAVOR WITH A BABOON.
HAVE SOME SHAME, YOU IDIOT!!
ACTING LIKE A PIMP AT YOUR AGE...
STORY 2: THE HORI MONDO MATTER

I FEAR OUR LORD IS NO LONGER HUMAN...
TO AN APE, MONDO...
BABOON... YOU WOULD LIKEN OUR LORD KATÔ AKINARI
HE TREATS PEOPLE NOT AS HUMANS BUT AS HIS DOGS...
VIOLENT AND OBSCENE TOWARD VASSALS AND WOMEN...
INDEED THE ACTS OF TYRANTS!! UNSPEAKABLE!!
AND THE WANTON VIOLENCE OF THE ASHINA!!

...IF LORD AKINARI
WERE TO BECOME HUMAN AGAIN
HORI.. MONDO ...
GII
I WOULD GLADLY OFFER MY DAUGHTER TO BE HIS MISTRESS OR SERVANT
OR ANYTHING HE DESIRES.
THAT YOU CALLED OUR LORD A BABOON, MONDO?
...SHALL I REPORT
GRIN

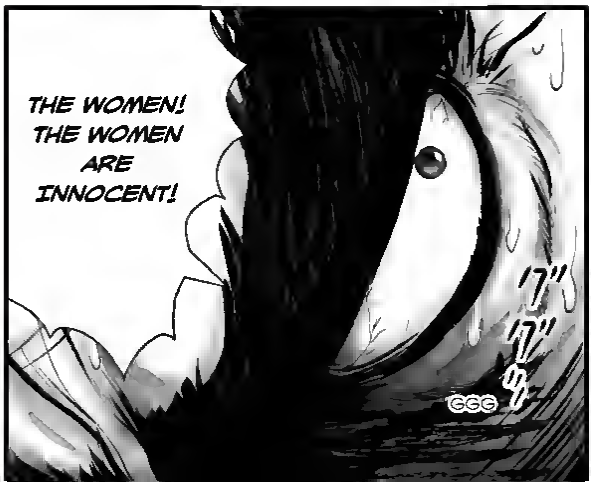
REPORT MY EVERY WORD.
NGUU...
GRRR
CRACK
CRACK
UWWO-WO!
GO
SMASH
GU.
GRAB

U... UH..
SMILE
にっ
NOW...
WHO SHALL I KILL NEXT...
AAH ...

MM?
WHERE IS YOUR COURAGE NOW?

YOU'RE A DISGRACE, MONDO.
ZA

CASTLE...BEFORE YOU FLED AIZU. MM?
THE AUDACITY WITH WHICH YOU FIRED YOUR GUNS UPON THE LORD'S


THE WOMEN! THE WOMEN ARE INNOCENT!
GGG

...MY MEN ARE ALWAYS PREPARED TO DIE..BUT...
AAH?

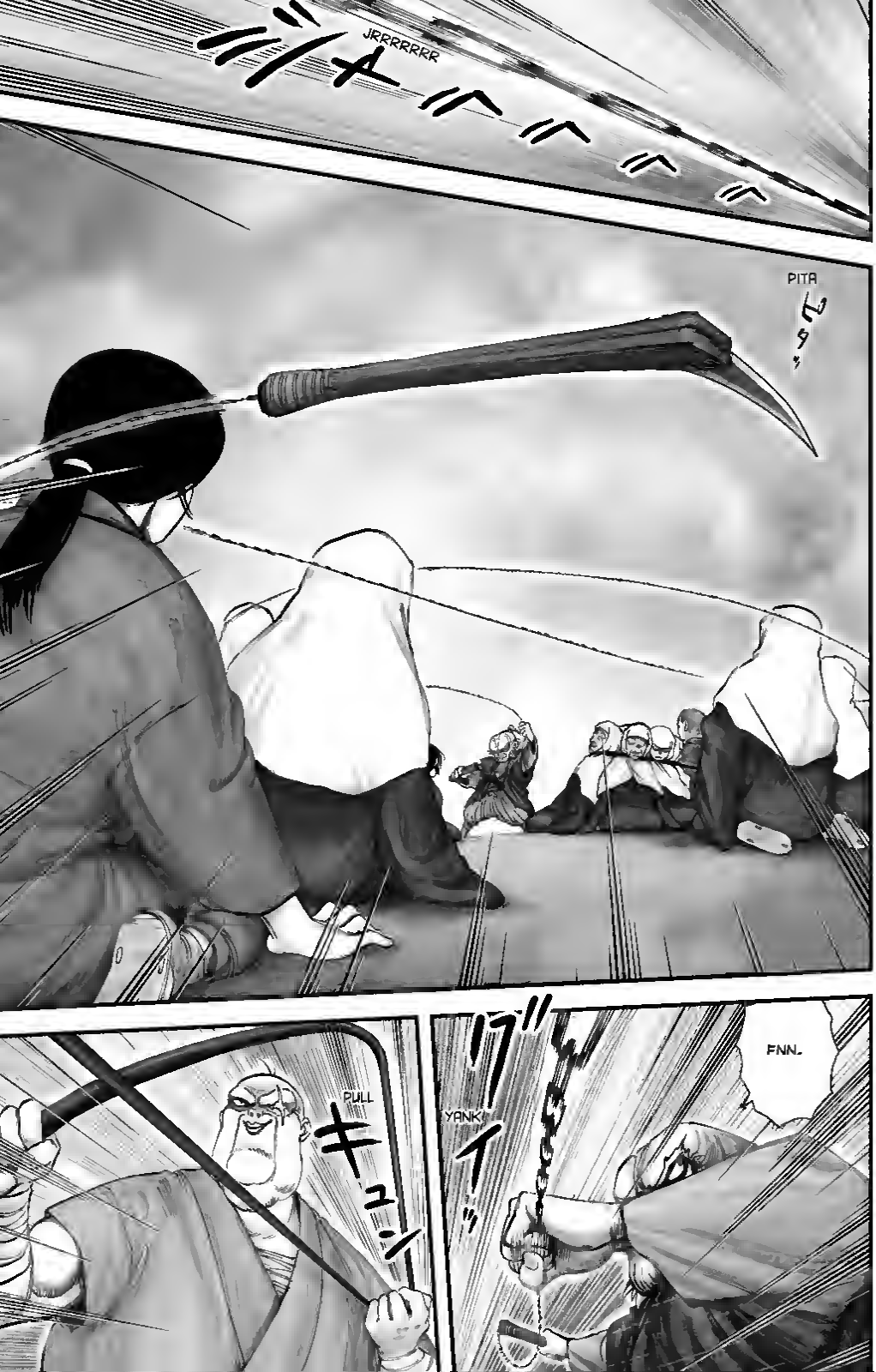
THEN...LET'S CONTINUE.
IS THAT ALL YOU HAVE TO SAY AFTER INTERRUPTING OUR SHOW, MONDO?
KACHIIN
YOU FOOL!
DON
GRF.
KINN
ASHINA CLAN, AIZU SEVEN SPEARS
KIRAGA MAGOBEI
WAIT, WAIT, KÔSHICHIRÔ. DON'T BE GREEDY.
OUR TURN...
HUH?

TO PLAY.
BISSHH!
!?
WSSHH
WSSHH
TAP
TAP
...AH...
...AHH...
AH...

YANK
GII
GII
HEE.
GU...
GE...
GO.
KA.
GII
HA.

GUNN
ゲン
GUGU
ゲゲゲ
GBRR
ゴボ
GSSHH
メリメリ

CLACK
KU-KUKU-KU....
KU KKU KU.
KYUN
KYUN
WHISSH
CLICK
SHYAAA.


JRRRRRRR
PITA
PULL
YANK!
FNN.

YANK
GRIN
LICK
SWING
DO
BA

DSSHH
DSSHH
NN...
GURRR...
DSSHH
DSSHH
DSSHH
AH...
AH...
AH...
HA.
GRIN
SPLAT
SPLAT
HEH.

OHHH...
ONLY SEVEN LEFT...

THERE'S ONLY SEVEN LEFT...
TO SPLIT AMONG ME, GUSOKU, AND GINSHIRÔ...
HMM, BUT...
DAUGHTER OF MANABE SHÔBEI, MONDO'S YOUNGER BROTHER
SAKURA
...SAKURA...
SMILE
STARTING WITH OCHIE, THEY'RE ALL AIZU'S BEAUTIES.
WELL NOW, THERE'S GOODNESS IN THE LEFT-OVERS.
DAUGHTER OF HORI MONOD
OCHIE

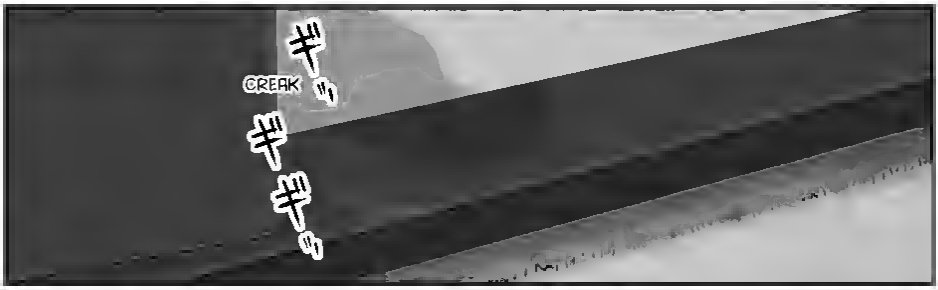
SO YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH SAKURA, GINSHIRÔ?
AHA.
AND YOU TWO CAN HAVE THE OTHER SIX.
LET ME HAVE SAKURA...
CLACK

THEN I'LL TAKE OCHIE... OFUE AND OSAWA.
DONE...

WIFE OF TAGAI MATAHACHIRÔ, MONDO'S YOUNGER BROTHER
OSAWA
SHUDDER
SHUDDER
. . . .
OCHIE'S SERVANT
OFUE

...THEN I'M LEFT WITH
OTORI, OSHINA, AND OKEI.
DAUGHTER OF ITAKURA BUDEN, HORI FAMILY VASSAL
OTORI
WIFE OF KANEMARU HANSAKU, HORI FAMILY VASSAL
OSHINA
WIFE OF INABA JYÛZABURÔ, HORI FAMILY VASSAL
OKEI
HEY, GUSOKU. WILL YOU GIVE ME OCHIE?
NO, NO. NOT A CHANCE, RENSUKE.
TREMBLE
TREMBLE

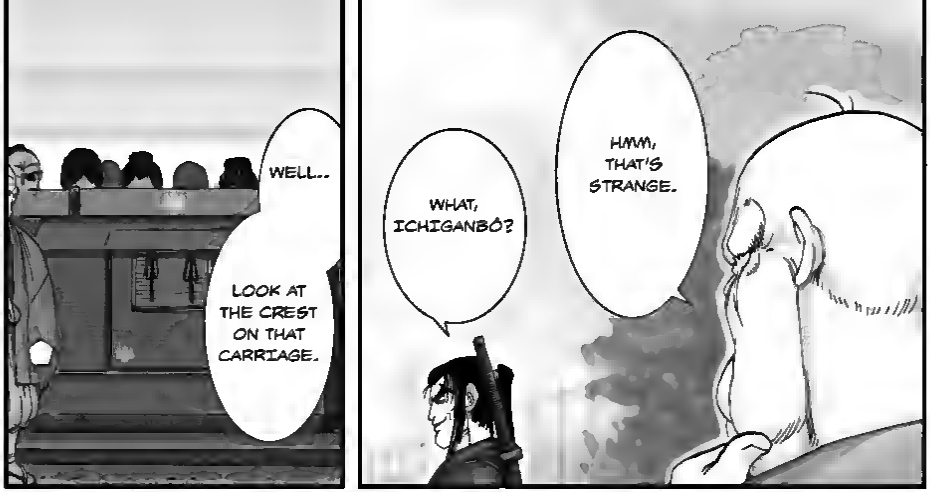
I MUST...
TOTTER
よろ...
IN EXCHANGE... FOR MY LIFE...
GRAB
ガシ
LA-LADY TENSHUNI!

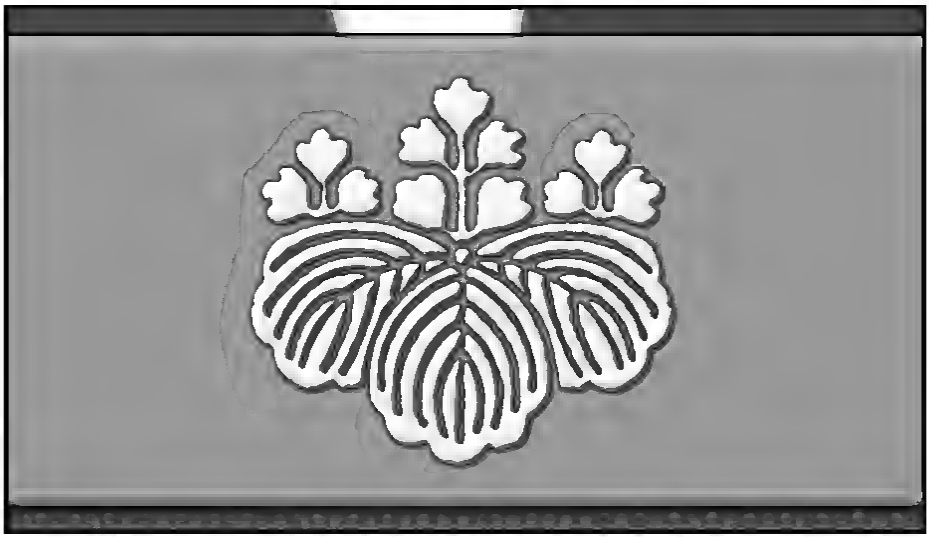

CREAK
キー
キーキー

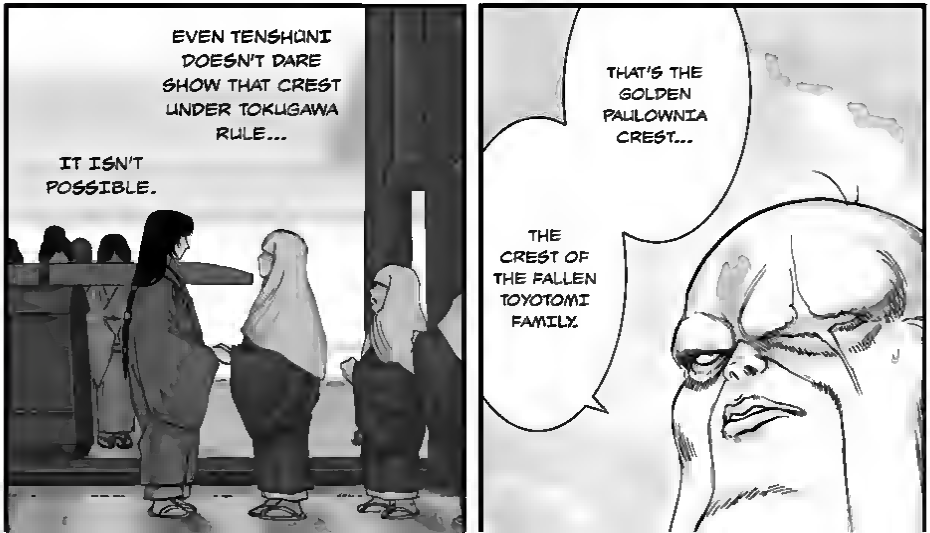
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS...
SU
スッ
TWITCH
ピク
!!

AH...
AHH...
ww?

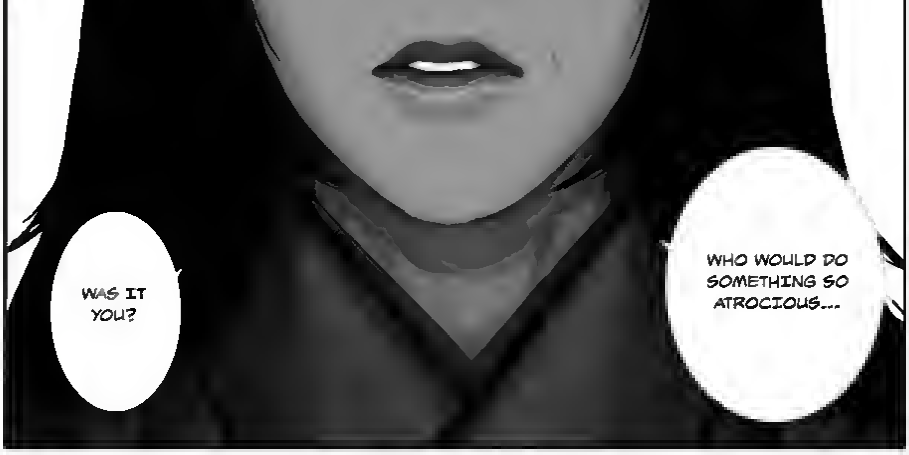
THAT ENTOURAGE... MAY BE THE WIFE OF A HATAMOTO*.
RIGHT.
A WOMAN'S CARRIAGE.
*Hatamoto: A Tokugawa vassal whose retainer is less than 10,000 koku. (In this case, koku refers to the amount of rice, which was a standard measurement of earnings.)
WE HAVE AIZU'S 400,000 KOKU BACKING US.
THEY'RE OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE.


WELL...
LOOK AT THE CREST ON THAT CARRIAGE.
WHAT, ICHIGANBŌ?
HMM, THAT'S STRANGE.




EVEN TENSHŌNI DOESN'T DARE SHOW THAT CREST UNDER TOKUGAWA RULE...
IT ISN'T POSSIBLE.
THAT'S THE GOLDEN PAULOWNIA CREST...
THE CREST OF THE FALLEN TOYOTOMI FAMILY.

ZA
CRACK


WAS IT YOU?
WHO WOULD DO SOMETHING SO ATROCIOUS...

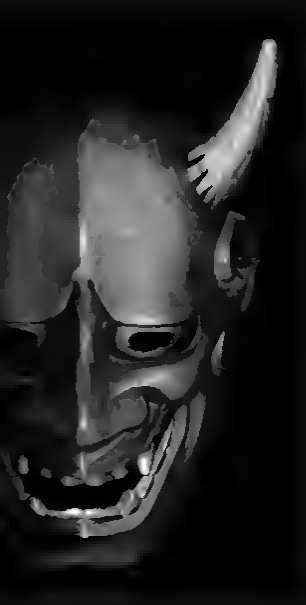
HAH?
TWITCH
ピク

WHY...
WOULD YOU DO SUCH A THING?

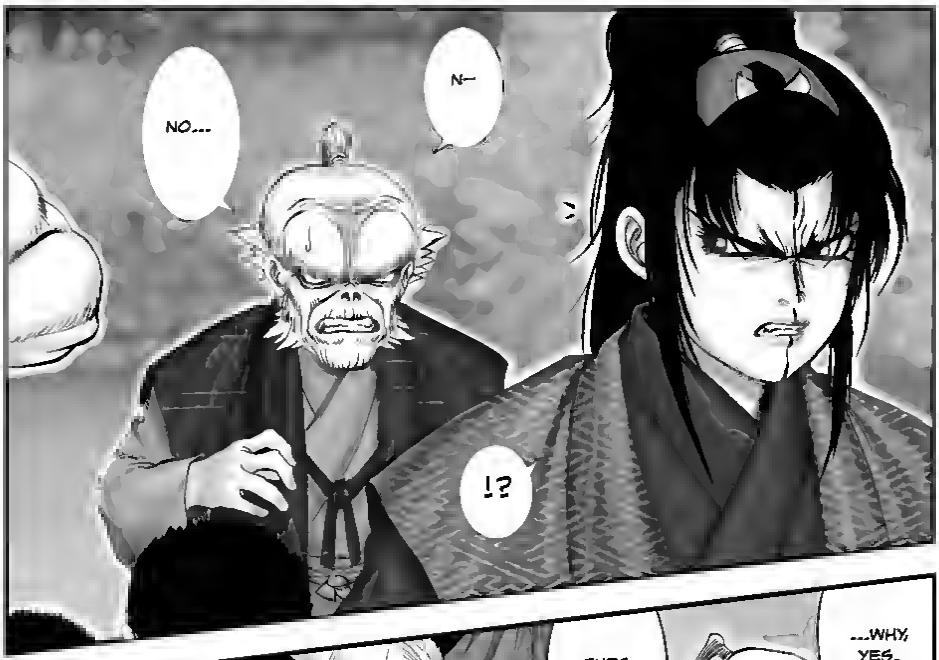
THAT IS A TREASON WORSE THAN THAT OF HORI MONDO!!
WHO ARE YOU TO SPEAK SUCH HAUGHTY WORDS!!
DIVINE RETRIBUTION FOR HORI MONDO AND HIS MEN!!
THIS IS FOR INCITING A REBELLION AGAINST OUR LORD AKINARI.
WE ARE VASSALS OF THE 400,000 KOKU KATO FAMILY!!
I AM CHIEF PRIESTESS TENSHŪNI'S...
.....
IN THIS AGE OF TOKUGAWA RULE!
HOW DARE YOU SHOW THE TOYOTOMI CREST
YOU'RE ONE TO TALK OF ATROCITIES!
KEH.

HAH?
YOU DON'T LOOK THE AGE.
HEY.
... IMPOSS-IBLE.
HM...
TENSHŌNI IS THE CHILD OF A MISTRESS WHO DIED WITH LORD HIDEYORI!
YOU'RE LYING!
MOTHER.
GUARDIAN OF TŌKEIJI TEMPLE
TENJUIN

I WAS
HIDEYORI'S WIFE.
STORY 2 END



I WAS
HIDEYORI'S WIFE.


N—
NO...
!?

...WHY, YES.
THIS LADY IS...

STORY 3: THAT MAN
PR...
PRINCESS SEN!!
PR... PRINCESS SEN!?
TOKUGAWA SEN.
THIS IS INDEED THE PRINCESS
PRINCESS SEN'S ELDER ATTENDANT
YOSHIDA SHURI
.....

PRINCESS SEN?
HAH?
THAT IS THE OLDER SISTER OF THE THIRD SHOGUN, LORD IYEMITSU.
GINSHIRO!
A VICTIM OF TOKUGAWA'S POLITICAL GAME...
AT SEVEN, SHE WAS MARRIED AWAY TO HIDEYORI.

SHE WAS RESCUED FROM THE FLAMES AT THE LAST MOMENT.

AT NINETEEN, DESPITE THE FATE OF OSAKA CASTLE...

ORPHANED BY LORD HIDEYORI'S MISTRESS...

A MERE SEVEN YEARS OLD, TENSHŌNI.

THEN THERE WAS THE CHILD WHO WAS THROWN INTO TOKEIJI TEMPLE.

PRINCESS SEN ENSURED THAT THE TEMPLE'S MALE PROHIBITION LAW BECAME ABSOLUTE, BY SECURING LORD IYEYASU'S GUARANTEE.

..ACTING AS TENSHŌNI'S SUPPORTER,

THUS...

THE LADY TENJUIN WHO STANDS BEFORE US IS
THAT WOMAN ---
.....

COMMIT SUCH CRUELTIES... KNOWING THE TEMPLE'S LAWS?
DID YOU...

WELL, WE HAVE
CARRIED OUT THESE EXECUTIONS WITH THE SHOGUN'S PERMISSION!

THAT IS FOR THE HORI MEN.

HERE IS A LETTER...

A CRIME IS A CRIME...
MA—MAN OR WOMAN, INCITING A REBELLION AGAINST THE LORD IS STILL A CRIME!

GRR
TEMPLE.
NOT AT THIS
ON AIZU'S HONOR, WE MUST FINISH THE MATTER WITH THE REMAINING SEVEN WOMEN!!
WE'LL HEAR YOUR ACCUSATIONS LATER!

HOW INTERESTING.
AHA...
ON AIZU'S HONOR YOU SAY?
NOT GOOD.
RENSUKE, HOLD GINSHIRÔ BACK.
THEN, I MUST GIVE MY LIFE...
TO PROTECT THESE SEVEN HORI WOMEN.

IRA
イラ
TCH.
YOU...
LE—
LET
GO.
RENSUKE!
GRAB
!?
ZA
HMPH.
WE ARE
GRATEFUL!!
PRINCESS SEN.

GRR.
SMUSH
GA
LET GO.
MGH.
WE WILL SOON BE TAKEN TO THE KATO MANSION IN EDO.
IF SHE DEMANDS TO HAVE THE MEN RELEASED, OUR PRIMARY MISSION WILL BE...
THIS IS BAD.
WE WON'T FORGET!!
HOWEVER UGLY OUR END MAY BE!
WE SHALL NEVER FORGET THIS DEBT!!
TO OUR GRAVES,

EVEN IF IT GOES AGAINST THE SHOGUN'S WISHES?
TAP
TAP
TAP
SHE MIGHT SAY IT.
HMPH...
IF THAT WERE TO HAPPEN WE WON'T BE ABLE TO FACE OUR LORD!
JUST WHEN WE WERE GOING TO FINISH THEM OFF.
BUT NOW...
.....
TAP
TAP

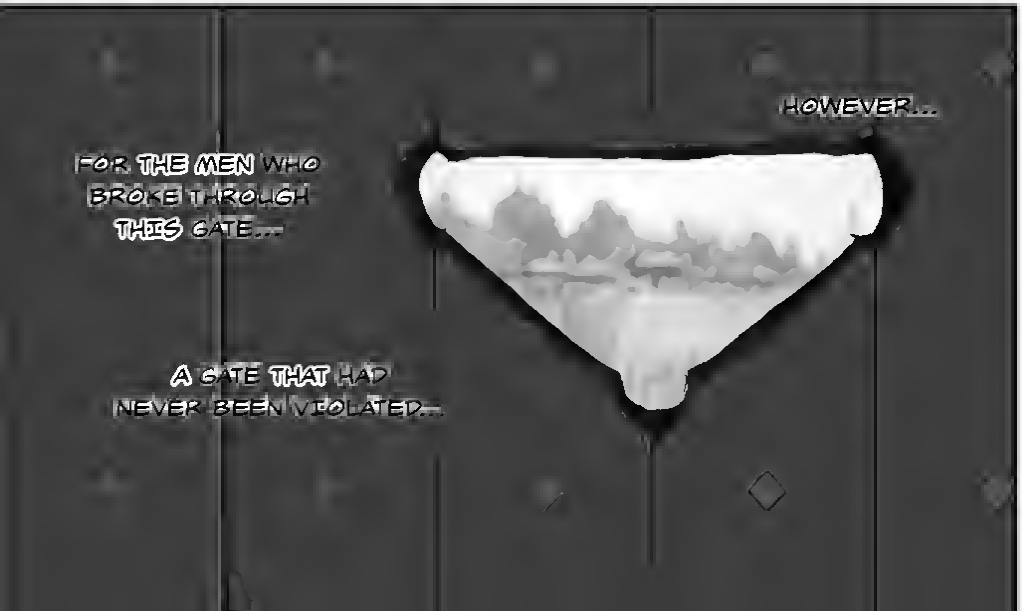
WE MUST RETREAT.
GP

WILL THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS FORGIVE US NOW?
LADY TENJUIN

RELEASING THEM WOULD UNDERMINE THE SHOGUN'S AUTHORITY.
...THEY ARE CRIMINALS IN THE EYES OF THE LAW...

IS THERE NOTHING WE CAN DO TO HELP THE HORI MEN...

SINCE THE SHOGUN IS MY BROTHER.
ALL THE MORE REASON...


HOWEVER...
FOR THE MEN WHO BROKE THROUGH THIS GATE...
A GATE THAT HAD NEVER BEEN VIOLATED...

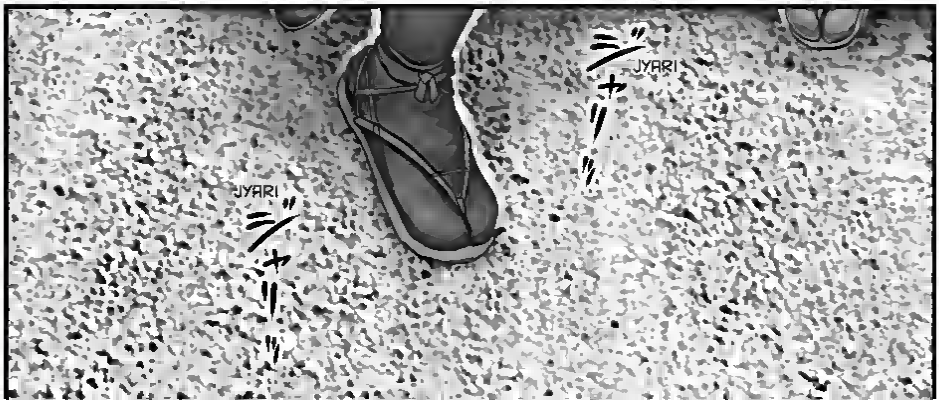
AT THE HANDS OF WOMEN.
THERE WILL BE A HARSH PUNISHMENT

UNDERSTAND WHAT IS IN MY HEART?
DO YOU...

LADY TENJUIN
YES.

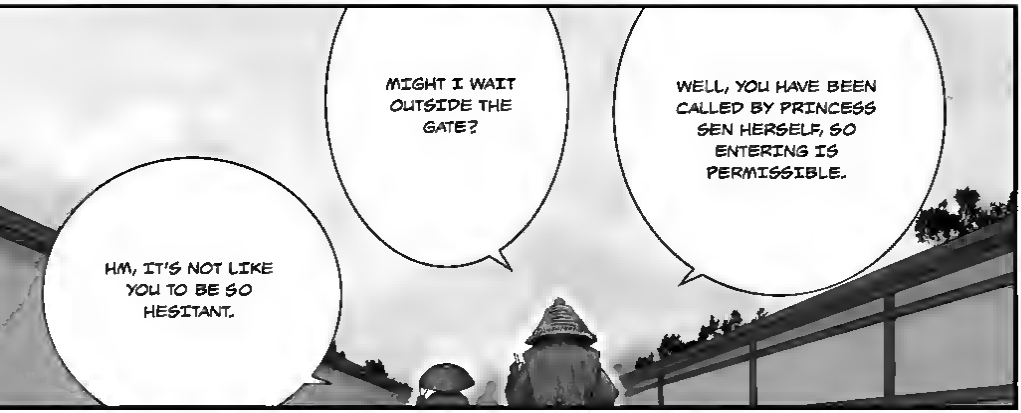
SQUEEZE
ギュッ
UNDER-
STAND...
I...

TEN DAYS LATER
— KAMAKURA ROAD—


JYARI
JYARI

JYARI
JYARI
JYARI
BY THE WAY OLD MASTER.
THIS IS MY FIRST TIME BEING CALLED TO A CONVENT...

EDO
SHINAGAWA
BANSHÔZAN
TÔKAIJI
TEMPLE HIGH
PRIEST
TAKUAN SÔHO
FOR ME AS WELL.
YES.
SMILE


MIGHT I WAIT OUTSIDE THE GATE?
WELL, YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED BY PRINCESS SEN HERSELF, SO ENTERING IS PERMISSIBLE.
HM, IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO BE SO HESITANT.

HM... THIS IS...
WHAT DO YOU MAKE OF THIS?

WHILE YOU'VE BEEN QUIBBLING... LOOK.
WE'RE HERE.

EDO YAGYÛ FAMILY,
MUNENORI'S SON

YAGYÛ JYÛBEI
MITSUYOSHI

柳生十兵衛三厳

STORY 3 END

PROBABLY...
KEMPÔ.

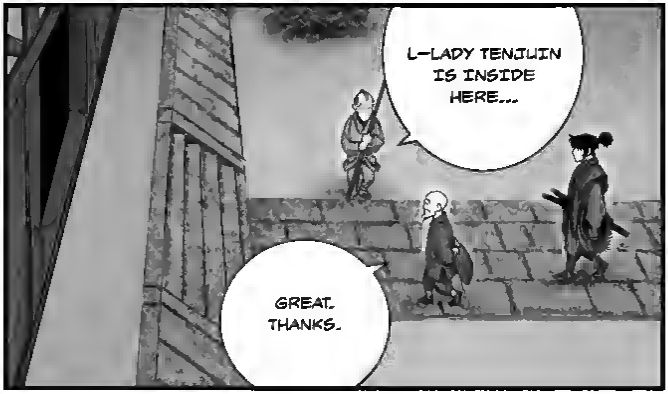
...
YES.

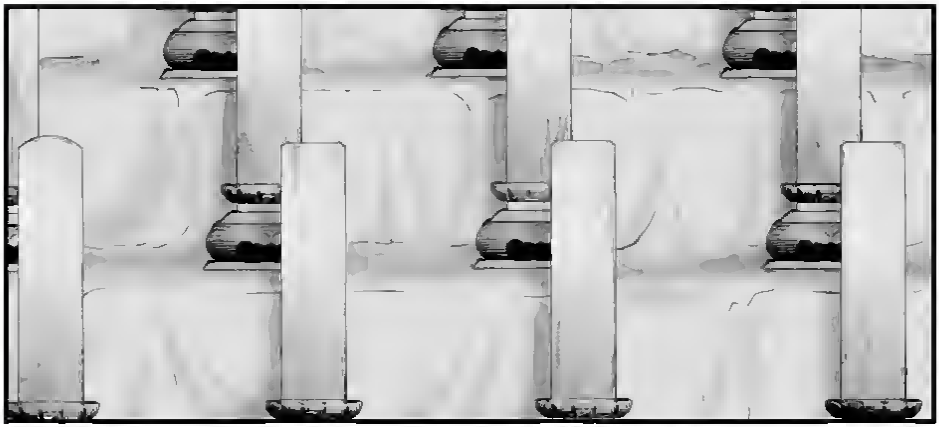
WITH BARE HANDS AND FEET.
BROKE THROUGH...

PUTS THE MALE PROHIBITION LAW TO SHAME.
RING
PERHAPS I SHOULD WAIT AT THE GATE AFTER ALL?
HMM.
GUI
HYO!
GRAB
RING
RING
RING
THUD

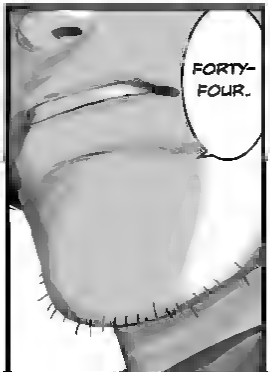
LETTING IN ANOTHER TWO OR THREE MEN WON'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE.
SWING
SWING
ブン
ブン
LOOK! LIKE A GIRL WHOSE HAD HER CHERRY POPPED.
HM.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT.
SMILE
ニヤ
HEY! PLEASE TELL THE LADY TENJUIN THAT TAKUAN OF EDO TŌKAIJI TEMPLE HAS COME TO SEE HER.
PEEK
ヒョコ
Y...
...YES.

STORY 4: FORTY-FOUR MEMORIAL TABLETS


L-LADY TENJUIN IS INSIDE HERE...
GREAT. THANKS.



HM.


FORTY-FOUR.

OHH... ZEN MASTER..

.....

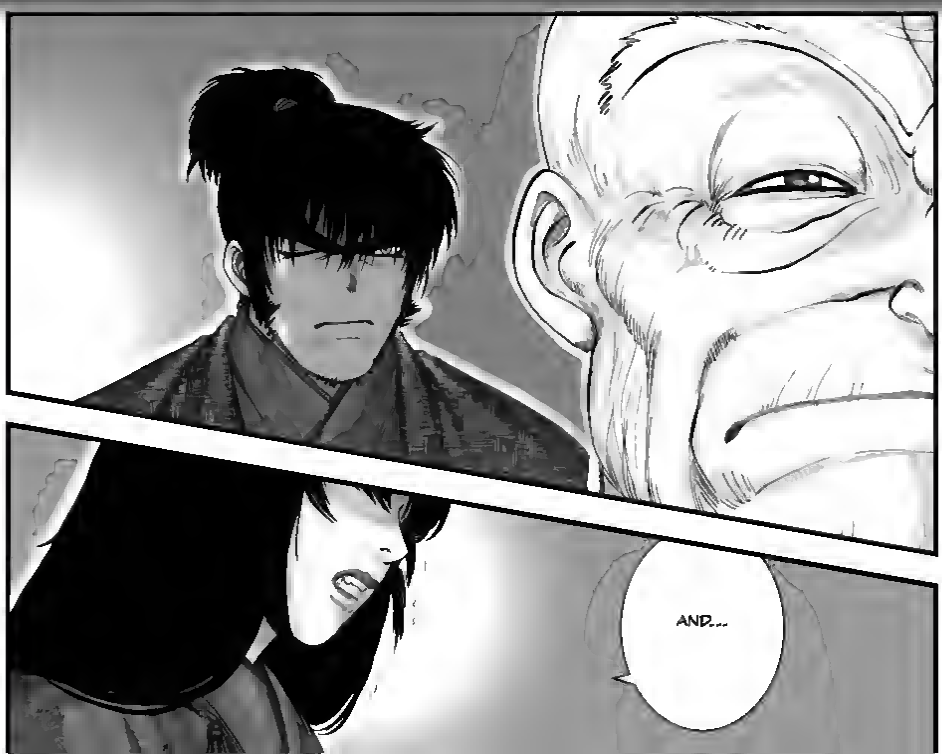
THANK YOU FOR COMING SO FAR.

LADY TENJUIN
THE LETTER HAD REPORTED TWENTY-THREE NUNS DEAD...
BUT FORTY-FOUR TABLETS?

I HAD SOMEONE INVESTI-GATE...
ALL TWENTY-ONE MEN WHO WERE DELIVERED TO THE KATO MANSION, WERE BRUTALLY EXECUTED.
.....

AND NOT BY SEPPUKU OR BY BEHEADING...
NOT CRUCIFIED OR BURNED AT THE STAKE...
THEIR FINGERS AND TOES WERE CUT OFF ONE BY ONE WITH A DULL BLADE TO PROLONG THE PAIN...

HE LAUGHED AND WATCHED THE EXECUTIONS OVER THREE DAYS.
AKINARI...LOOKED ON AND DRANK SAKE.


AND...

THIS CANNOT BE KNOWN IN PUBLIC BUT...
AFTER THE SEVEN SPEARS HAD REPORTED ON WHAT TOOK PLACE HERE...
YOU'VE
DONE WELL.

...THEN
LADY TENJUIN.
...THUS.
EVEN PRAISING THEIR ACTIONS.
.....
RATHER THAN RELYING ON THIS SILLY PRIEST
PERHAPS REPORTING TO THE SHOGUN DIRECTLY WOULD BE A BETTER TACTIC.
INDEED... I AGREE.
HOW EVER...
I CAN'T IMAGINE THAT LORD IYEMITSU
WOULD IGNORE THE APPEALS OF HIS DEAR SISTER...

IS NOT MY DESIRE.
THAT
IF THE SHOGUN WERE TO PUNISH THE KATÔ FAMILY FOR THIS INCIDENT
OH?
I WOULD RATHER PUT A STOP TO IT.
.....

...I DO NOT WISH ANY HELP FROM MEN
TO DEAL WITH THE SEVEN SPEARS
FURTHER MORE
THESE WOMEN DO NOT WANT THE HELP OF THE SHOGUN

ZEN MASTER,
THOSE MONSTERS, WHO HAVE VIOLATED US AND TÔKEIJI TEMPLE,
MUST BE DEFEATED BY THE HANDS OF THESE SEVEN WOMEN.
RUB
.....
AND IN THE END!
WE WILL CRUSH THE AIZU KATÔ FAMILY!

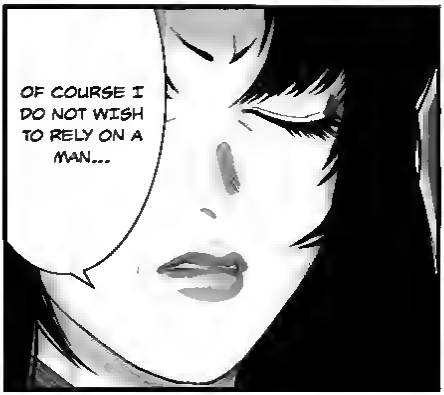
...I'M OCHIE, HORI MONDO'S DAUGHTER.
LADIES,
THIS IS ZEN MASTER TAKUAN FROM EDO TÔKEIJI TEMPLE.
INTRODUCE YOURSELVES.

OSAWA, WIFE OF TAGAI MATAHACHIRÔ. LIKEWISE MONDO'S BROTHER.
SAKURA, DAUGHTER OF MANABE SHÔBEI. MONDO'S BROTHER.

OKEI, WIFE OF HORI FAMILY VASSAL INABA JYUZABURÔ.
OTORI, DAUGHTER OF ITAKURA BUDEN, LOYAL TO MONDO.
LIKEWISE, OSHINA, WIFE OF VASSAL KANEMARU HANSAKU.
BUT LADY TENSHUIN!
BA
BOW
OFUE, LADY OCHIE'S SERVANT.

HE MAY BE A WRINKLED OLD PRIEST, BUT HE'S STILL A MAN!
WHY DID YOU CALL UPON A MALE PRIEST?
.....

WELL THEN...


OF COURSE I DO NOT WISH TO RELY ON A MAN...

DREADFUL MEN WITH EXTRAORDINARY SKILL.
...OUR ENEMY IS THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS.
.....

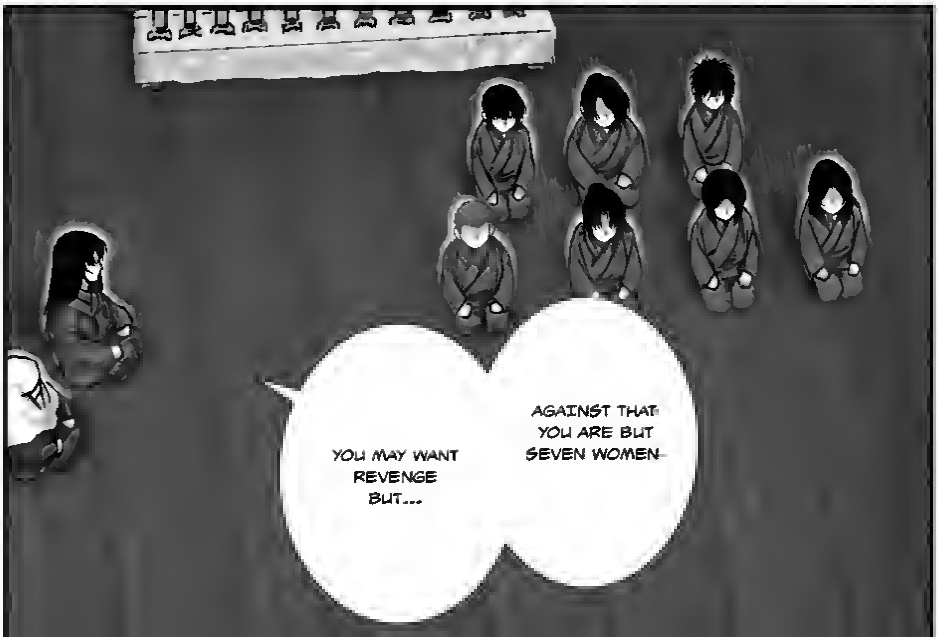
THAT'S ENOUGH, OFUE.
...YES.

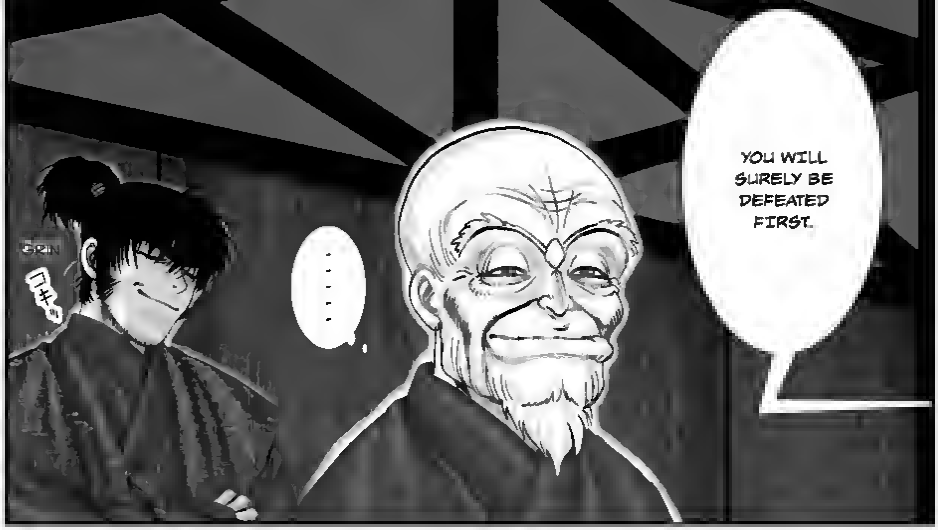
WASHINOSU RENSUKE HAS UNPARALLELED STRENGTH.
HE [illegible]OKE THE MAIN GATE WITH HIS BARE HANDS AND FEET.
GUSOKU JYONOSHIN COMMANDS THREE DOGS, THE SIZE OF CALVES.
HIRAGA MAGOBEI...
HE IS THE DEVIL WITH A LONG SPEAR.

SHIBA ICHIGANBO
MANIPULATES THE WHIP TO HIS WILL..
THE OLD MAN CALLED DAIDÓJI TESSAI
IS AN EXPERT WITH THE SICKLE AND CHAIN.
AND THE BOY, KÓRO GINSHIRÔ...
GRIN
ニヤリ

HE THROWS A MISTLIKE WEB...
THAT CAN CONTAIN PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS.
HMM.
RUB
AND URUSHIDO KOSHICHIRO...
DESPITE MISSING AN ARM, HE IS A DEMON WITH THE SWORD.

BACKING THESE MEN ARE ASHINA DÔHAKU,
AND THE TYRANT WHO SEEMS IMPERVIOUS TO THE SHOGUN'S REBUKES,
THE OLD MAN WHO TRAINED THEM...
AIZU'S KATÔ SHIKINOBUSHÔ AKINARI.


YOU MAY WANT REVENGE BUT...
AGAINST THAT YOU ARE BUT SEVEN WOMEN


YOU WILL SURELY BE DEFEATED FIRST.
. . . . . .

LA-LADY TENJUIN!
WE HAVE ALREADY FORFEITED OUR LIVES!!

OCHIE... THAT IS
WHAT THE ENEMY WANTS.
DO NOT BE SELF-DEFEATIST. CHERISH LIFE AND YOURSELF
YOU MUST ACHIEVE WHAT IS DIFFICULT.

...THIS IS WHY I CALLED THIS MEETING...
LADY TENJUIN...

ZEN MASTER TAKUAN
HAS BETTER RELATIONS WITH SWORDSMEN AND GENERALS THAN WITH OTHER PRIESTS...

SO I'VE ASKED HIM
TO CHOOSE JUST ONE MAN WHO CAN PREPARE
YOU TO HAVE YOUR REVENGE...

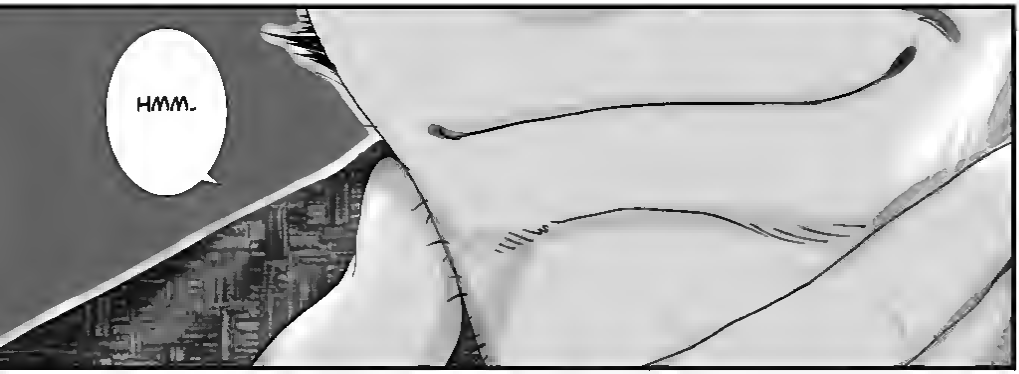
NOW DO YOU SEE WHY I'VE BROUGHT YOU HERE?
.....
TURN

THERE WERE BITS I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND FROM THE MASTER'S EXPLANATION ALONE BUT NOW...
RUB

VERY
INTRIGUING.
RUB
ナデ

...BUT.

?


HMM.

I COULD INSTRUCT
THESE SEVEN WOMEN FOR A HUNDRED YEARS...

THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS.
BUT I DON'T THINK THEY CAN DEFEAT...
SCRATCH
STORY 4 END

YAGYU JYUBEI
MITSUYOSHI.

I COULD INSTRUCT THESE SEVEN WOMEN FOR A HUNDRED YEARS, BUT I DON'T THINK THEY CAN DEFEAT THE AIZU SEVEN SPEARS.

H-HOW DARE YOU!
.....

MY GUESS IS THESE MEN
HAVE ENDURED TOUGH TRAINING UPON TRAINING AND ARE NOW AT THE PEAK OF THEIR SKILLS.

IN SHORT
.....
SCRATCH
WINK
HEH....TOUGH TRAINING IS SOMETHING YOU KNOW ABOUT.
EVEN IF I STARTED TUTORING THESE DAINTY BEAUTIES NOW...
AGAINST THOSE SEVEN DEVILS...
HMPH
HMM.
NO WAY THEY'D BE READY IN TIME....
STEP

YOU.
...WHA?
SMACK

AH.
UH.
A... AH.
WHO ASKED YOU
TO TUTOR US, HUH?
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
HUH.
STORY 5: INTO THE ABYSS

THE SEVEN OF US WILL DEFEAT THE ENEMY.
GO BACK TO EDO WITH YOUR TAIL BETWEEN YOUR LEGS IF YOU'RE AFRAID OF THE ENEMY!
ザン
STOMP
TURN
クルッ
BUT LADY OCHIE!
STOP IT!
OFUE.
DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF OVER US...
...BUT AS OFUE SAID
...PLEASE FORGIVE OFUE'S INSOLENCE.

*Yagyu Tajima: Yagyu Tajimanokami Munenori: The shogun's Sanetsuke, who was entrusted to oversee the Daimyo or feudal lords

I'M
JYUBEI
MITSUYOSHI.

SWING
LEAVE!
AA.
MISS
UH.
SMACK

SPIN
OW!
THUD
RUB
RUB
YOU'RE AN EXCEPTION TO WHAT I SAID BEFORE...
HEH... YOU'RE STRONG.
D-DON'T TOUCH ME, STUPID!
SLAP
STOMP
STOMP
STOMP

JYŪBEI...
LADY TENJUIN:
IT'S LIKELY THAT THE FIGHTING ARTS OF THE SEVEN SPEARS...
IS OF A SCHOOL THAT IS YET UNKNOWN TO US. I WOULD EVEN SUSPECT THAT THE ASHINA
MARRY ONLY WITHIN THE CLAN.
SO THEY MIGHT PASS ON THEIR FIGHTING ARTS THROUGH BLOOD TIES.

"AIZU IS THE THROAT OF MUTSU."
THE INCIDENT ON HIS FIRST VISIT TO EDO, SOON AFTER HE SUCCEEDED HIS FATHER YOSHIAKI AS AIZU HEAD...
...AND KATÔ AKINARI.
IN OTHER WORDS, THE SHOGUN HAS ORDERED YOU TO
KEEP THIS OLD MAN AT BAY IN SENDAI.
YOU DO UNDERSTAND THAT, HM, LORD SHIKINOBUSHÔ?
SNRP
SENDAI (620.000 KOKU) CLAN HEAD
DATE MASAMUNE

...IF YOUR TERRITORY WAS TWICE ITS SIZE,
SAY, 1,200,000 KOKU...
I WOULD RATHER MARCH MY MEN AND TAKE IT THAN KEEP YOU THERE...
A PITY, REALLY.
WHAT...

LORD DATE MASAMUNE IS A BOLD MAN, FEARED BY OTHERS AS THE ONE-EYED DRAGON.
YET AKINARI IS SAID TO HAVE HELD HIS OWN AGAINST HIM...
HE WON'T STAND BY QUIETLY IF WE MAKE AN ENEMY OF HIM.
EARLIER YOU CALLED THIS ALL "VERY INTRIGUING."

HEH.
FOR ONE, I TOO MIGHT BE IN DANGER AGAINST SUCH MONSTERS.
THAT'S VERY INTRIGUING.
BECOMING A CORMORANT MASTER IS ALSO VERY INTRIGUING.
PULL
POINT
POINT
...AND SECOND, I CAN TRAIN THESE LADIES AS MY CORMORANTS*1.
*1 Cormorants - Seabirds which are lethal fishing birds and trained to catch fish.
THEN YOU WILL TAKE THEM ON, JYUBEI?
YOU!

THERE'S NO DENYING THIS ONE WITH THE BUTCH CUT IS BEAUTIFUL, THOUGH.
SHRK
SHRK
I'M ESPECIALLY PLEASED THEY'RE SO BEAUTIFUL!
AS YOU WISH. THANK GOODNESS, THEY KEPT THEIR HAIR!
SLAP!
...HAD THEY BEEN OLDER PERHAPS...
THEY KEPT THEIR HAIR
BECAUSE I HAD ONLY INTENDED TO HIDE THEM HERE UNTIL THE MATTER WAS RESOLVED...
BUT I THOUGHT IT SAD FOR SUCH YOUNG WOMEN TO END THEIR DAYS AS NUNS.

DO NOT MAKE A RASH PROMISE SO YOU CAN HAVE YOUR FUN WITH THESE WOMEN...
BUT JYUBEI,
OF COURSE... THESE WOMEN WILL SURELY
DIE.

AT LADY TENJUIN'S REQUEST, I WILL INSTRUCT YOU, BUT YOU MUST DEFEAT THE ENEMY YOURSELVES.
YOU WILL NOT DEFEAT THIS ENEMY WITHOUT DYING.

I INTEND TO THROW YOU INTO THE ABYSS.
RUB
PREPARE YOUR-SELVES.
THAT GOES WITHOUT SAYING!
WE WERE PREPARED TO DIE FROM THE START!!
KI
RUB
HM.

NOT JUST YOUR LIVES.
RUB
スリ
MAYBE GIVE UP YOUR CHASTITY, TOO.
WHA...
SQUEEZE
ギュッ
WHAT'S WRONG...
AFRAID?

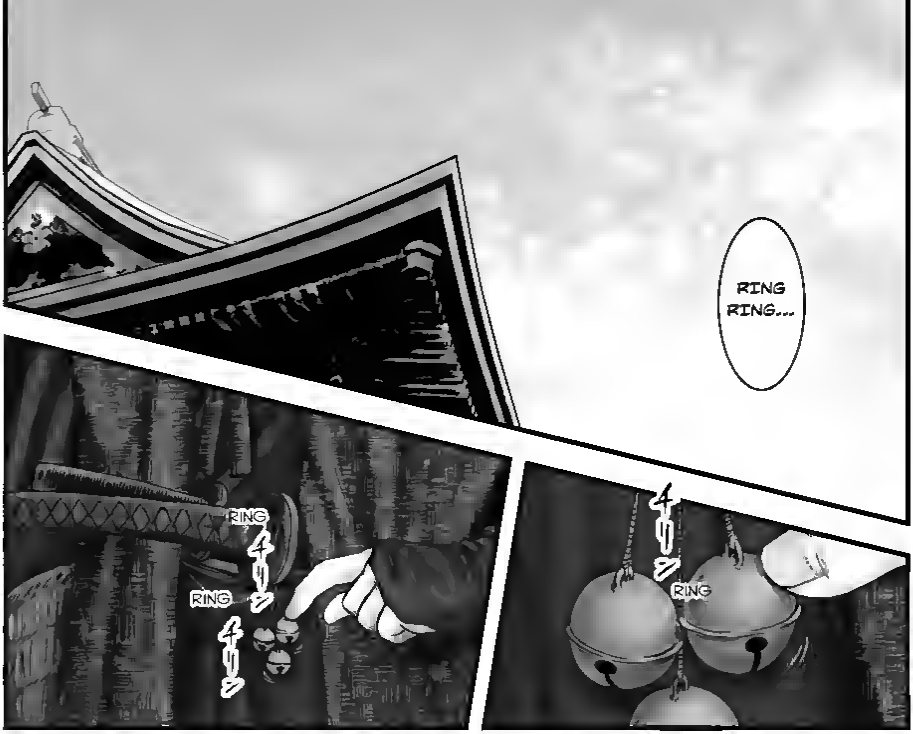
.....
.....
CLENCH
.....
.....
WE
WILL.

STRA... STRATEGY?
HM. THEN STARTING NOW, I SHALL TEACH YOU THE ART OF MILITARY STRATEGY.
WE CAN'T COMPETE AGAINST MONSTERS IN SWORDSMANSHIP.
AT THIS POINT, WE MIGHT GAIN ADVANTAGE BY FOCUSSING ON DIFFERENT MILITARY STRATEGIES...THE SUN TZU SCHOOL, THE KUNG MING SCHOOL, KUSUNOKI, KÔSHÛ, SANADA...
UNDER-STAND?
HUH...
.....

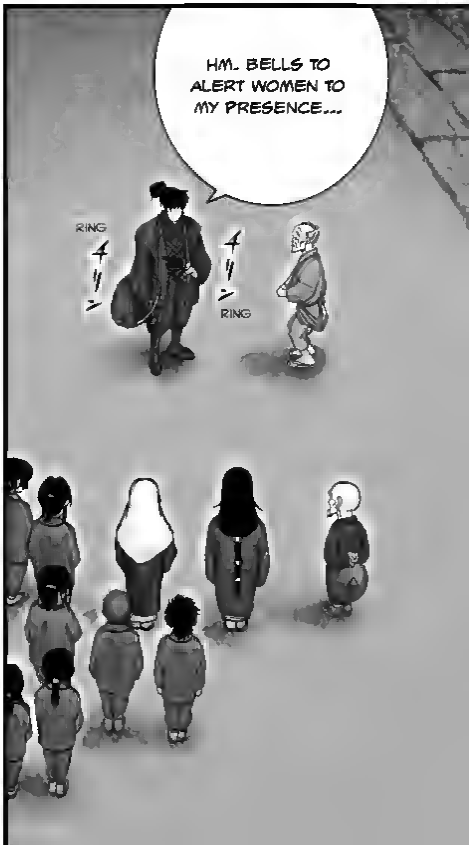
SO LADY TENSHOUNI,
DO I HAVE YOUR PERMISSION TO STAY HERE TO BEGIN MY LESSONS?
EH...

.....
WELL...
AH...

HEH.

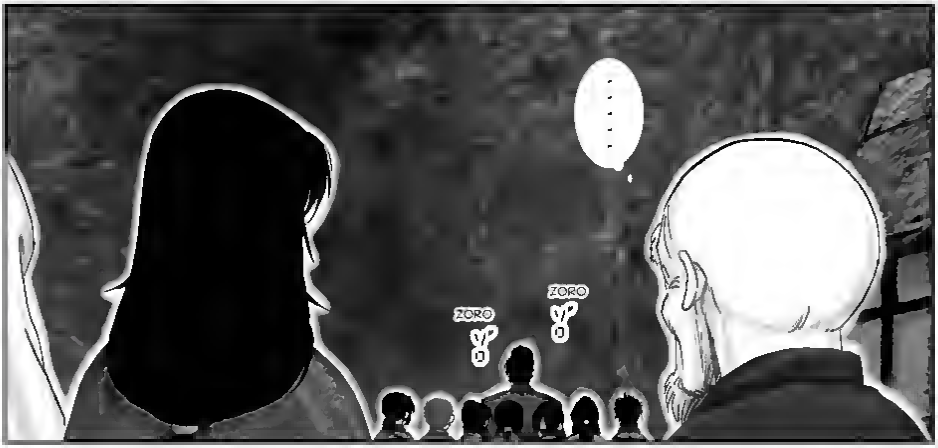

RING RING...
RING
RING
RING

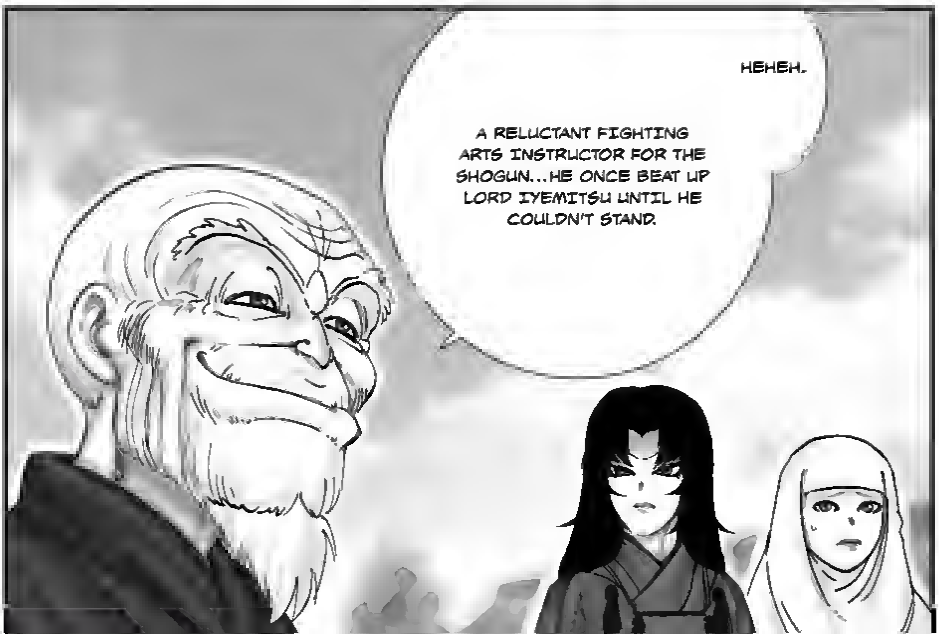
YOU MUST WEAR IT WHILE YOU ARE HERE.


HM. BELLS TO ALERT WOMEN TO MY PRESENCE...
RING
RING

I'D LIKE A PLACE TO MEET WITH THEM...
NOW, A SCHEME IS BEST HATCHED IN SECRET.
I UNDER-STAND.

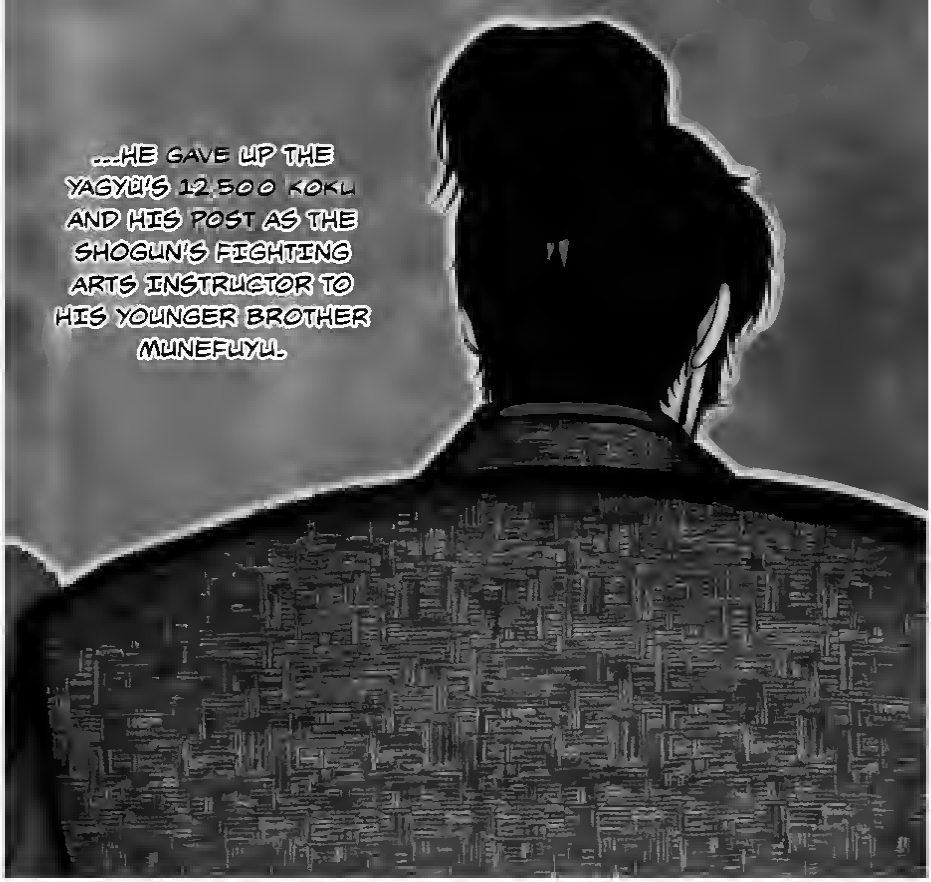
THE CEDAR WOODS IN THE REAR?
THAT'S GOOD. THEN IT'S DECIDED.

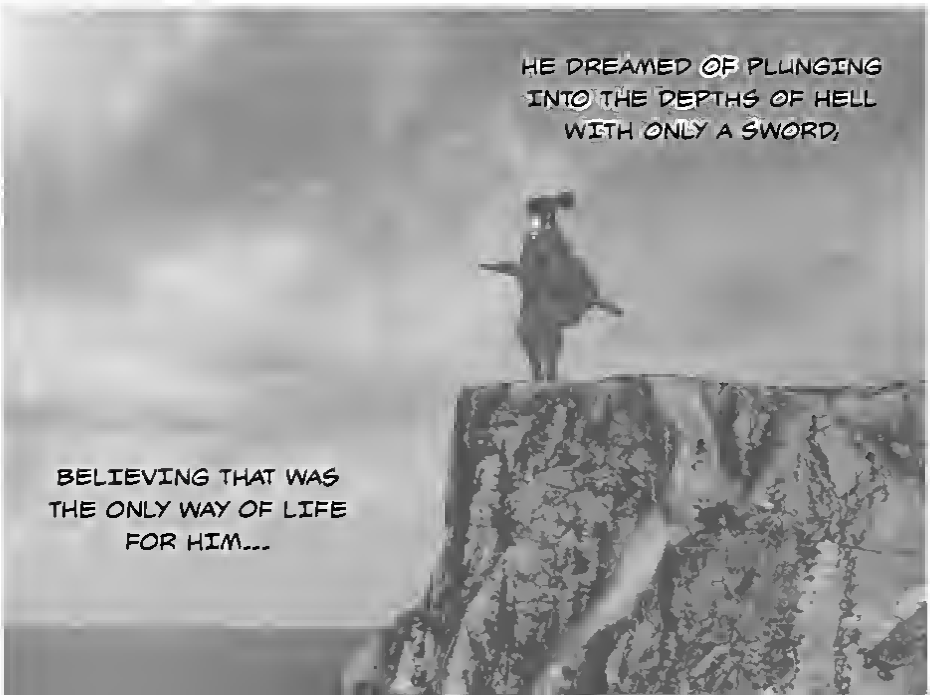

.....
ZORO
ZORO


HEHEH.
A RELUCTANT FIGHTING ARTS INSTRUCTOR FOR THE SHOGUN...HE ONCE BEAT UP LORD IYEMITSU UNTIL HE COULDN'T STAND.

BUT THIS TIME.
HE SEEMS PLEASED WITH THIS JOB...
SHOULD WE ENTRUST THE WOMEN IN HIS CARE?
ZEN MASTER... HE SEEMS TO SAY INDECENT THINGS...
WELL.
SCRITCH
SCRITCH
PROBABLY.

.....
AAAAA!
PUB
PUB
...ZEN MASTER,
CAN HE TRULY HELP US DEFEAT THE ENEMY...
.....
PROBABLY.
SCRATCH
SCRATCH
...HE IS A FREE-SPIRITED SORT BUT...


...HE GAVE UP THE YAGYU'S 12,500 KOKU AND HIS POST AS THE SHOGUN'S FIGHTING ARTS INSTRUCTOR TO HIS YOUNGER BROTHER MUNEFUYU.


HE DREAMED OF PLUNGING INTO THE DEPTHS OF HELL WITH ONLY A SWORD,
BELIEVING THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY OF LIFE FOR HIM...

THERE IS NO BETTER MAN FOR THIS UNDERTAKING THAN JYUBEI.
.....

...OH.

THE BELLS ON HIS HIPS
!?
--ARE NOT RINGING...

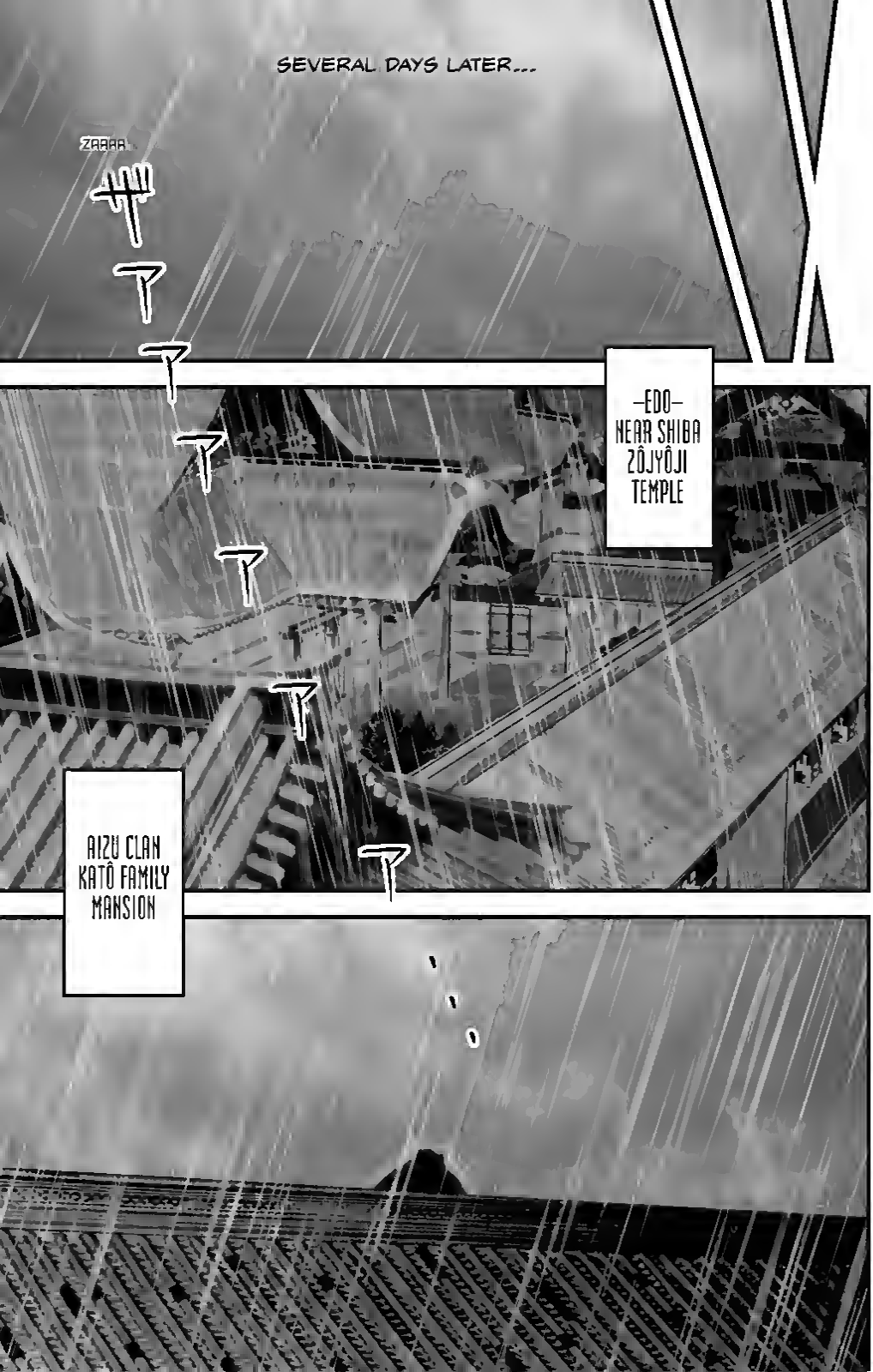
LA-LADY OCHIE...

RING
RING
RING

NOW.
LET'S GO.

HEH.
FEEL BETTER IF IT RANG?

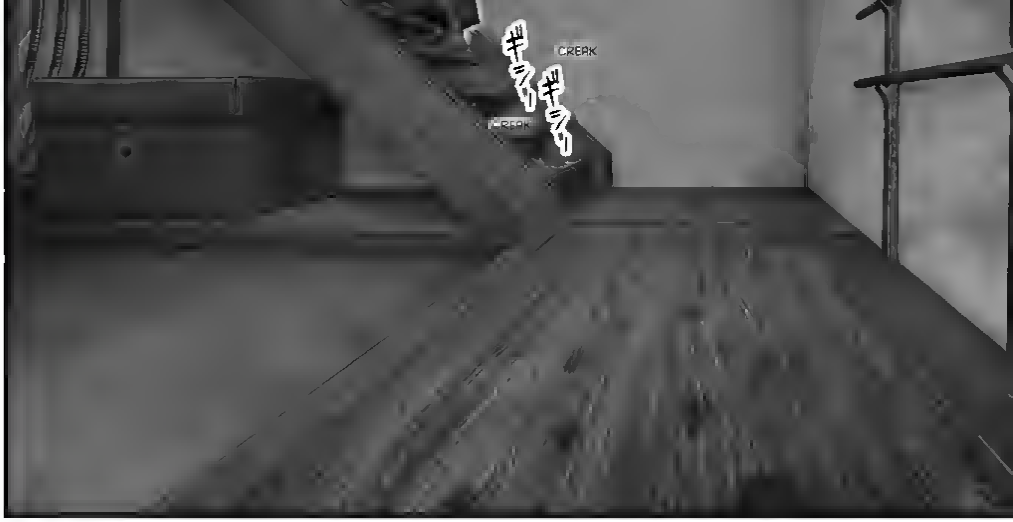
.....
...HE'S GOOD...
...HIPS?
.....


SEVERAL DAYS LATER...
ZAAAA
-EDO-
NEAR SHIBA ZÔJYÔJI TEMPLE
AIZU CLAN KATÔ FAMILY MANSION

STORY 5 END

ZAAAP
アアアアア
ア
ア

ZAAA...
WEAPONS STORE-ROOM
-EDO-
NEAR SHIBA OOJÔJI TEMPLE
STORY 6: SEVEN SNAKE EYES
CREAK
ZAAA...


ギラ
CREAK
ギラ
CREAK

SLIDE
スッ

CREAK
ギラ

SHUT
ピシャ

SLIDE
ARE YOU AWAKE, MY LORD?
LORD...
STAGGER

** Girls: Women of noble birth who served in the noble court

*Yoshiwara: A brothel district sanctioned by the Edo Shogunate

YES,
THERE ARE SEVERAL.
IF YOU WISH, I WILL GO TO YOSHIWARA MYSELF
TO MAKE ARRANGE-MENTS FOR THEM.

AND NOBLEST ONES YOU CAN FIND.
YES, THE PROUDEST...

I'VE GROWN TIRED OF THIS LOT...
TELL JINNEMON THAT I WILL TAKE SIX NEW ONES OFF HIS HANDS.
PUNCH
ドン

AND
WHAT OF THESE WOMEN...
HM,
I'LL CAST THEM OFF TO YOU.

KSY.

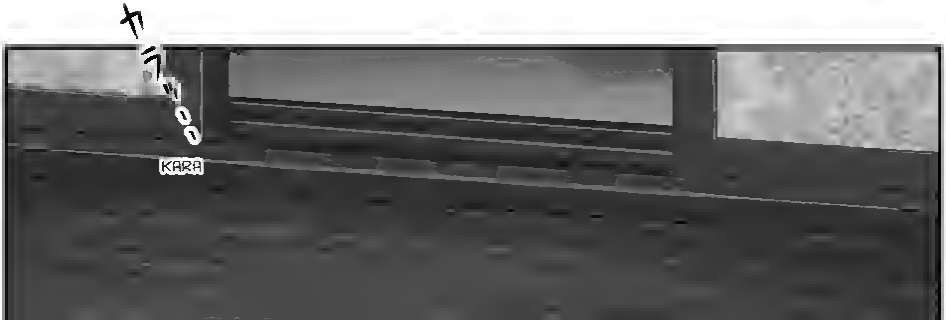
MY LORD! WE ARE GRATE-FUL!

LICK
BY THE WAY... YOU ARE AWARE...
UH...
.....
ZAAA...
THE NAME OF THIS PLACE IS THE...
"FLOWER PIT"?

WHEN THEY ARE YOURS...
TREAT THEM SO THEY WILL REMEMBER THAT NAME....

THAT IS AN ORDER.
UNDER-STAND?
BITE
カプッ
...!!

OF COURSE.
WITH PLEASURE!


カラ…
KARA

HUH?
WHAT IS IT, TESSAI?
MUD...
STRAW SANDAL TRACKS!?
WHAT!!
WHAT IS IT, MAGOBEI?

H..HEY, THAT'S...
.....
IRIZAYA
NRGH!
OLD TESSAI.
JUMP
BOOM
.....
IMPOSSIBLE... IN ONE LEAP!

DASH
AN INTRUDER... WITHOUT OUR KNOWING...

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!

WAS LISTENING IN FROM THE TOP OF THE STAIRS!!

GRAB
DASH
ZAHAHA!!
!?
OLD TESSAI!!
NRGH...

WHAT IS... THIS...
. . . . .
SHRRRR
SPLAT
AAHH!!
NRGH!?
蛇の目は七つ
SEVEN SNAKE EYES

WHO ARE YOU!?
IRA
HE'S MOCKING US!
...COULD IT BE THE SHOGUN'S SPY...
ZAAAAAA
WOHH!?

TO PROTECT THESE SEVEN HORI WOMEN.
THEN, I MUST GIVE MY LIFE...
THE SHOGUN'S SPY...
IT'S POSSIBLE...

...BUT.
A SPY WEARING A HANNYA MASK... ODD...
...THE IMPORTANT HORI MEN
ARE ALL DEAD.

IF HE IS A SPY JUST STRIKE HIM DOWN!
...RIDICULOUS! IT'S USELESS TO SPECULATE.
SMILE
ニヤリ

SPLASH
MAGOBEI!
WEDGE
I'LL RIP THAT MASK
OFF YOUR FACE WHEN I GET YOU!!

GRAPPLE
GGGH...
ZAAAAA...
HEH.
WOHH!!
NWOHH.
WOHHH.

TURN
ぐぃル
NRGH!?
TURN
ぐぃルぃ
OOF!
BAM
ナイッ
ZAAAAA
ァァァァァ

MAGOBEI!
STING
STING
STING
SMASH
WSHHH
GA!
!!
JANGLE
SHAA!!
CLACK

JANGLE
BOM
TNN
JANGLE

ZAAAAA
TESSAI!!
LEAVE HIM TO ME!!
ZA

ZAZAZAZAZA
KAAAAA!!
STORY 6 END
TO BE CONTINUED IN VOLUME 2

about the authors

FŪTARO YAMADA

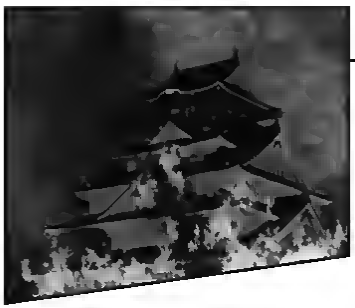
Born in 1922 in Hyogo Prefecture, Fūtaro Yamada made his debut as a novelist while still a student at Tokyo Medical University. Yamada was known for his mystery novels such as *Ganchuu No Akuma*. Later, his Ninja Scrolls series became wildly popular. He penned a wide body of literature, including the period piece *Makaitensei*, as well as several collections of essays such as *Ato Senkai No Banmeshi* and *Ningen Rinjyuu Zukan*. He passed away on July 28, 2001.

MASAKI SEGAWA

Masaki Segawa made his debut in 1997 with the series *Senma Monogatari*, which ran in the weekly comic *Morning*. In 1998, he began his long-running *Uppers* magazine series *Onigiri Jyuuzou*, which ended in the year 2000. This is his second-longest-running series and his first adaptation. He loves cats and watermelon. He currently resides in Funabashi.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more an art than a science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.



Kannei 19, page 1

The nineteenth year of the Kannei era. The name of the era changes when a new emperor is enthroned, and so the number corresponds with the year of the emperor's reign. Occasionally, the era name was changed following a natural disaster or famine, as a way of starting anew.

Tôkaidô, page 4

The Tôkaidô Road was one of five main roads connecting the Edo capital to various areas of Japan. This road was perhaps the most heavily traveled since it connected Edo to Kyoto. There were fifty-three stops along the way, which flourished as rest areas where travelers could eat and sleep. Hiratsuka was one such stop.

ACCORDING TO RUMORS I'VE HEARD DURING MY TRAVELS
THEY'RE AIZU SAMURAI WHO REBELLED AGAINST THEIR LORD THREE YEARS AGO AND FLED TO KÔYASAN...

Kôyasan, page 8

There are many Buddhist temples in this mountainous area.

Divorce temple, page 21

A sanctuary for women who sought divorce. Also known as refuge temples because they took in battered women.

Hara-kiri, page 26

Considered an honorable way of killing oneself by cutting open one's own stomach.

500,000 *koku*, page 27

Koku is a standard meesurement of rice, but it's also used as a measurement of land ruled over by a lord. Tokugawa Tadanaga ruled over 500,000 *koku*. In other words, he ruled over an area that could cultivate 500,000 *koku* of rice. Since the gate came from Tadanaga's palace, it's no wonder the gate is sturdy and grand.

Toyotomi Hideyoshi, page 28

Hideyoshi was responsible for unifying Japan. After his deeth in 1598, he was succeeded by his son Hideyori, then six years old. Though there were many families loyal the Toyotomi, Osaka Castle fell to Tokugawa Iyeyasu's forces in 1615, marking the end of the Toyotomi rule. Hideyori and his mother, the Lady Yodo, committed suicide. The end of the Toyotomi family opened the way for the Tokugawa Shogunate.

Mistress, page 65

Lords took many mistresses or wives, who would have children to ensure a male successor and prolong the family bloodline.

Sickle and chain, page 78

Tessai's weapon is a sickle and chain (*kusarigama*), a lethal weapon of the early Edo period. The weight on one end of the chain was usually thrown so that the chain wrapped around the enemy, although Tessai is using the weapon differently here.

Woman's carriage, page 92

The carriage that was carried by men, or palanquin, was a mode of transportation for people of high class and rank. Different types were used according to class and gender, which is how Kôshichirô knows that this is a woman's carriage.

***Kempô*, pages 124-125**

Kempô is the Japanese name for kung fu. This form of martial art originated in China and was brought over to Japan during the seventeenth century.

Forty-four tablets, page 135

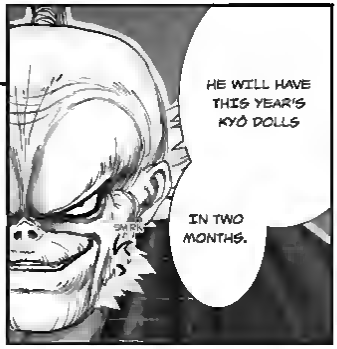
A memorial tablet is made of wood and has the dead person's name written on the front. The number four is considered unlucky in Japan because the words "four" and "death" are pronounced the same—*shi*.

Seppuku, *page 136*

Seppuku is another way of saying hara-kiri, an honorable way of dying by disemboweling oneself.

Kyô dolls, page 194

Dolls with long, black hair that were made to look like typical Kyoto women. In this case, the women are being likened to the dolls.



Hannya mask, page 210

Mask of a demoness, with horns and a face expressing a woman's jealousy, scorn, and pain.

Strike him down, page 210

During the Edo period, samurai could kill farmers and commoners of low rank who have acted wrongly against them without punishment.